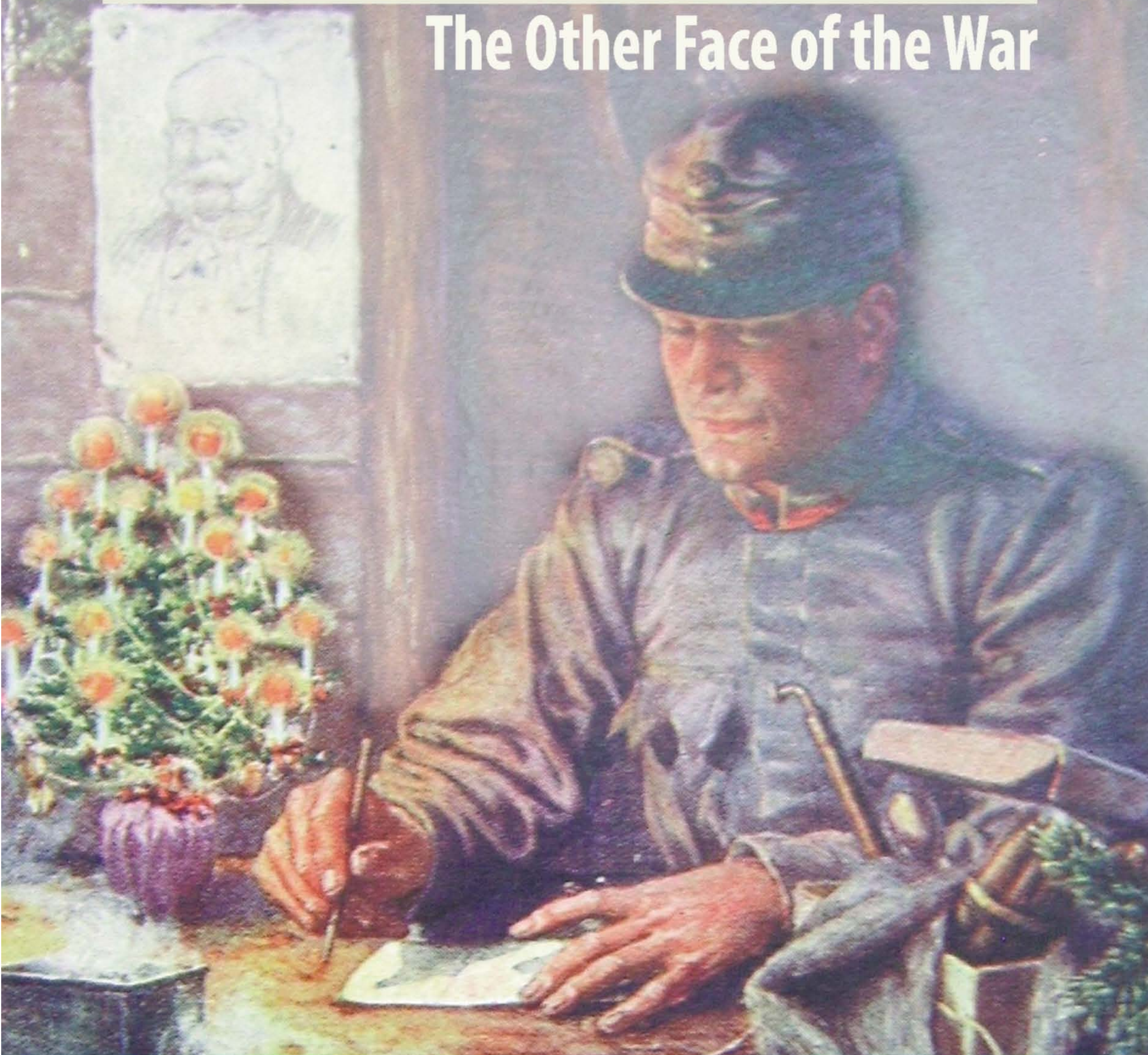


WORLD WAR I

The Other Face of the War



Edited by

IOAN BOLOVAN ■ RUDOLF GRÄF ■ HARALD HEPPNER ■ OANA MIHAELA TĂMAȘ

PRESA UNIVERSITARĂ CLUJEANĂ

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FOREWORD

"THE OTHER FACE of the war" indicates there are some need to focus on World War I, which had a great impact on later generations influencing not only the interwar period, but also some thinking and acting till near present.

"The other face of the war" symbolizes also the readiness to study not only the military but also the civil aspects including the perspectives of the contemporaries on the other sides of the fronts.

"The other face of the war" may also show the respect to all small contemporary people too involved unwillingly into a period of dense violence.

Finally "the other face of the war" means the reason to participate at an international discussion on World War I Studies focusing on less known subjects for working in favour of a larger horizon.

The more than thirty studies in this book represent the results of a conference held at the Babeş Bolyai University in October 2015 and show the large engagement of the mostly young scholars and their interest to make new research. Although the majority of the authors come from Romania, there are some others from other countries too. In the centre of attention is the Romanian space and its diverse regions, but the different subjects show that just this area can be understood as a little cosmos.

The contents are structured in three parts: the first part under the title "Political thought and memory" underlines the diversity among the contemporaries to think and handle the war time and its actions and shows the different aspects of memory like a colourful prism. The second part under the title "Nationalism" contains the message that the "Great war" had a quite official function for the visions and plans among the European nations, while the third part of the contents under the title "Civil society" focuses on some aspects concerning the every day life phenomena which do not correspond with the head lines within the historiography.

We hope that this publication may demonstrate the serious engagement of the Romanian historiography to join at World War I Studies as well as indicate that a new generation is going to bring into the research world some 'new wind' in favour of unreserved knowledge about the past.

THE EDITORS

POLITICAL THOUGHT AND MEMORY

FRANCE AND THE ROMANIAN PUBLIC OPINION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE GREAT WAR



HADRIAN GORUN

Abstract

This paper attempts to focus on the demonstrations of sympathy in favour of France, expressed by an important part of the Romanian public opinion. As sources, I particularly used the press, in fact a few issues of the “Universul” and the “Adevărul” newspapers from the second half of the year 1914 and first months of 1915. As for the methodological point of view, I somehow resorted to a theoretical approach, emphasizing the importance of the public opinion in international relations. The role of the public opinion was not only taken into consideration, but even underscored/emphasised by the inter-war liberalism, called idealism. A large number of people expressed their sympathy for France in Bucharest, Craiova, Galați, Târgoviște. Many demonstrations were organized by the National Action, the Cultural League and Patriotic Action.

Keywords

Public opinion, France, Romania, idealism, national interest, demonstrations, the National Action.

Introductory and theoretical remarks. The role of the public opinion in international relations

GENERALLY SPEAKING, the international relations theories have neglected or even minimized the importance and the role of public opinion. The ability of public opinion in a particular state to influence, even to an insignificant extent, the foreign policy decisions of the government, has often been ignored and even eluded. The post-war political realism did not take into account the possible pressures of the public opinion over the governmental decisions. In a similar manner did, in the late of 1970s, the structural realism. The primary role was given to diplomats, governments and military commanders.

Exception to this rule was, however, the liberalism of the interwar period, called idealism. The idealism did pay an increased attention to public opinion. The idealistic theory was opposing to the old diplomacy, in fact to the secret diplomacy, which was perceived as the embodiment of “the arrogance of elites”. From the idealistic perspective the public opinion should have a greater importance than negotiations and treaties concluded in the diplomatic chancelleries. In fact, the secret diplomacy was categorically rejected.¹

For the idealist thinkers, the public opinion plays a prominent role in political life in politics and implicitly in international relations and foreign policy. The idealism emphasizes the contribution of public opinion from a country in shaping and articulating the foreign policy behaviour of the state. We can therefore affirm that the idealism not only takes into consideration the role of public opinion, somehow unfairly ignored by other schools of thought, but also, emphasizes it. The democratization of international relations would constitute a possible goal to accomplish, due to the essential mission of the public opinion.²

This paper aims to reveal some aspects regarding a few sympathy demonstrations for France and the Entente. At the beginning of the world conflagration, an important part of the public opinion in Romania was Francophile. As to the reasons and motivations of the adopted behaviour, the French Republic was perceived as the elder Latin sister of Romania and, equally, a model of civilization and culture to be followed. On the other hand, the national ideal was animating both the Romanian and the French people. The Romanian national ideal was considering the acquisition of Romanian territories, which were under foreign domination. French national aspirations were heading for the regaining of Alsace and Lorraine. The similarity of the goals generated closer relations and mutual sym-

1. See Stefano Guzzini, *Realism și relații internaționale*. Translated by Diana Istrățescu (Iași: Institutul European, 2000), 45-50; Joshua Goldstein, Jon Pevehouse, *Relații internaționale*. Translated by Andreea-Ioana Cozianu, Elena Farca, Adriana Straub (Iași: Polirom, 2008), 149-152. See also Hadrian Gorun, *Relații internaționale în secolul al XX-lea: Concepte fundamentale, școli de gândire, repere istorice* (Târgu-Jiu: Editura “Academica Brâncuși”, 2011), 103-107.
2. S. Guzzini, *Realism și relații internaționale*, 49-51.

pathy between the two countries in the eve of World War I.³ The development of the bilateral relations was being materialized gradually, despite the growing isolation of France after the defeat from 1870-1871.

Some sympathy demonstrations in favour of France as reflected in the Romanian press

ONCE I have started from these theoretical premises concerning the role given to the public opinion in idealism, I tried to evoke some sympathy demonstrations in favour of the French Republic. The press articles contained in newspapers like *Universul* and *Adevărul* from the second half of 1914 and the first months of 1915 served me as the main sources.⁴

I must make clear an important aspect. Actually, the manner of acting was typically realistic for the Francophile public opinion in Romania. The public opinion has often demanded Ion I. C Brătianu Government to adopt immediately the decision of joining the Entente in World War I. The fulfilment of the Romanian national interest justified such a behaviour. The national interest is one of the most important concepts valorised by the realist theory.⁵

Since the Entente (the military alliance that included France) had promised support for accomplishing the Romanian national aspirations, many Romanian citizens came forward, expressing their great sympathy for France in the cities of the country: Bucharest, Craiova, Galați, Târgoviște and others. Many demonstrations were organized by the *National Action*, *Cultural League* and the *Patriotic Action*. The contribution of some Romanian cultural and political personalities such as Nicolae Iorga, Nicolae Filipescu, Vasile Lucaciu, Nicolae Titulescu and others was outstanding.

A part of the press in Romania, such as the as *Adevărul* and *Dimineța* newspapers, were strongly pleading for Romania's intervention in the war along with France. Their director, Constantin Mille, attended all meetings of the *National Action*. The Entente's followers managed to seize the newspaper *Universul*. The General Grigore Crăiniceanu, a fanatic Francophile, was appointed director of this publication.⁶

3. Hadrian Gorun, *Relații politico-diplomatice și militare ale României cu Franța în primul război mondial*. Foreword by Lucian Nastă (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2009), 13.

4. I approached this topic in a paper published in Romanian. See Hadrian Gorun, "Opinia publică românească și Franța la începutul primului război mondial", in *România în istoria Europei*, vol. I, ed. Marusia Cîrstea and Sorin Liviu Damean (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2013), 572-585.

5. See Hans Morgenthau, *Politica între națiuni. Lupta pentru putere și lupta pentru pace*. Translated by Oana Andreea Bosoi, Alina Andreea Dragolea and Mihai Vladimir Zodian (Iași: Polirom, 2007).

6. Pamfil Șeicaru, *România în Marele Război* (București: Editura Eminescu, 1994), 74.

Demonstrations of sympathy for France grew by end of July 1914 in the context of the outbreak of the world conflagration. Thus, a large group of French reservists left Bucharest being called in France by the order of mobilization. Many Romanians accompanied the French to the North Station, showing their sympathy for France. They shouted “Vive la France!” (Long live France), “Vive la Roumanie!” (Long live Romania). The participants carried flowers in their hands and had the flags of the two countries.⁷

The flags of the two states together emphasize the feeling of solidarity and brotherhood between the two nations. The Francophile public opinion was sure that France could play again a vital role in the life of the Romanian nation. France could actively support Romania to create a unitary, strong and respected state in the international arena.

Despite the restrictive decisions of the government, the manifestations supporting the French-Romanian approach did not lose in amplitude in August. For example, at the residence of doctor Ion Cantacuzino, the Franco-Romanian Friendship Association Committee gathered, under George Diamandi's presidency. The Committee had, among others, to send a telegram of sympathy to the French Government, and help families of mobilized French and Belgian soldiers who found themselves without any support in Romania.⁸

The desideratum of national unity was animating Romanian population. Both in Bucharest and in other cities had been held large meetings organized by the *Cultural League*, the *Carpathians Society*, the *National Action*, the *Patriotic Action*, and by other similar associations who wanted Romania's alliance with France and the Entente. On the occasion of these meetings, prominent political and cultural personalities such as Nicolae Iorga, Nicolae Titulescu, Barbu-Ştefănescu Delavrancea, Vasile Lucaciu, Octavian Goga, delivered speeches. All of them were supporting Romanian's intervention in the war for the liberation of co-nationals. Nicolae Filipescu was the most active Romanian politician who fought for Romania to join the Entente. He organized several demonstrations in the capital. A series of processions were held at the statue of Michael the Brave. The medieval ruler was perceived as the symbol of the struggle for unity. Filipescu was advised by his close friends to take the lead of the movement for national unity and for entering the war along with France. In fact, three major militants, Nicolae Filipescu, Take Ionescu and Emil Costinescu pledged to support each other and continue working until they determine the entrance in the war alongside France, England and Russia.⁹

In September 1914, the Entente managed to obtain the first major successes. In this context, there were strong protests against Austria-Hungary and in favour of France. According to the liberal I.G. Duca in early autumn 1914, in Bucharest the growing francophilia was expressed both by a part of the press and by students

7. *Universul*, XXXI, 1914, 204.

and the general public.¹⁰ On the occasion of such meetings, people were shouting “Vive la France”. The participants sang the hymn “Aux armes” and interpreted various patriotic songs.¹¹ The call for intervention in the war alongside the Entente was explicit.

In the newspaper *Universul* from September 6, 1914 appears an article titled “France will win”. The article is linked to the return to Romania of Professor Toma Popescu, who had lived in France at the beginning of the war and thus was able to grasp the mood of the civilian population from there: “I find myself in the happiest moment of my life due to the great French victory, I found out after 9 days of standby on my way home [...] As for the mood of France, [...] it can be translated by the following words: “Either win or vanish”. When a whole nation is so aware of the great moment in which it stands, there is no reason for that nation not to be victorious. What surprised me [...] is the calm, the confidence, the absolute lack of any deterrent doubt after the hard battles from the beginning and the firm conviction in the final victory.”¹² The article was of course about the precious French victory on the Marne River (5 to 12 September 1914), that stopped the dangerous advance of the German army. That success strengthened the cohesion of the French nation.

Many scholars and Romanian statesmen finished their studies in Paris. French culture played the main role in their intellectual and professional training. The activity of the *National Action* in favour of the national unity was very intense. Romanian public opinion found out the news regarding the French military success of Marne. After that, in Bucharest, Iași and other cities a series of demonstrations were held in favour of Romania’s entry into the war on the side of the Entente. The mobilizing calls such as “Let’s cross the Carpathians!” were increasingly common.¹³ The moment seemed favourable for a successful intervention in the context of Russians’ victories in Galicia.

In mid-November 1914, the propaganda for France and national unity intensified. On November 18, the *National Action* organized a large protest at Dacia room. The number of people participating was estimated at 10,000. There spoke personalities such as Nicolae Filipescu, Dr. Toma Ionescu, Iulian Vrăbiescu, Nicolae Popovici, Nicolae Flea. The speakers cheered France and its allies and also accused the methods used by Austria-Hungary and Germany to make Romania their ally. The Government was invited to rally as soon as possible to the Entente, in order to ensure the triumph of law over force. N. Filipescu had a passionate and stimulating speech. He emphasized the fact that the victory of Entente was the fulfilment of the national ideal, but the Central Powers’ victory meant the burial of the ideal and the denationalization of Transylvanian Romanians.¹⁴ The journalist Charles Rivet addressed in the early winter of 1914 a telegram for *Le Temps* news-

8. *Universul*, 1914, 231.

9. I. G. Duca, *Memorii* (Timișoara: Editura Helicon, 1992, vol. I), 73-74.

paper, in which he remarked the pro-French orientation of the public opinion in Romania, which was demanding immediate cooperation with the Allies.¹⁵

The propaganda in favour of the Entente among the public opinion has not decreased in intensity in early 1915, since the *National Action* and the *Patriotic Action* planned to organize protests in which slogans like “Let’s cross the Carpathians” and “The releasing time has come, brothers!”, were on the agenda every day. These exhortations were embraced with enthusiasm by the population.¹⁶

The French press militated, in its turn, for a commitment as quickly as possible of Romania along with France. In this respect, they were pronouncing publications like *L’Homme Enchaîné* owned by Georges Clemenceau and *La Revue Hebdomadaire*. In February 1915, the Entente decided to force the Straits in order to drive the reluctant governments from South Eastern Europe into action.

Furthermore, in order to attract neutral states from the Balkans, namely Greece, Bulgaria and Romania, a military mission commanded by General Paul Pau was sent to these countries. The *National Action* and the Romanian Students’ Centre from Bucharest organized a grand reception, designed to deeply impress the French high guest: “Let’s all go to the station to welcome the illustrious general [...]. In the person of General Pau, let us celebrate France – our friend from now on and our ally for tomorrow [...] He embodies in our eyes the French army who, fighting for France, is fighting for Transylvania too.”¹⁷ Deeply moved, General Pau was to declare “under this circumstance, you do not greet me, you greet France.”¹⁸ He expressed the hope that French and Romanian armies would soon be on the same side in the war.

Take Ionescu organized in its turn a dinner party in honour of the distinguished guest. At this dinner party, various personalities attended, such as Jean-Camille Blondel, Stansislav Poklevski-Koziell, Vojislav Marincovic, Serbia’s minister in Bucharest, Vasile Lucaciu, Nicolae Filipescu, Nicolae Titulescu and Emil Lahovari.¹⁹ The very cordial welcome that General Pau enjoyed helped to maintain and increase French hopes that Romania would join the Entente. The pressure exerted by the public opinion was able to put its stamp on the government’s decisions.

The landing at Gallipoli organized in February 1915 by the French and British did not bring Bulgaria’s entry into the war alongside the Entente, but postponed its entry alongside the Central Powers. At the same time, it encouraged Francophile groups from Romania. They still held a strong campaign in favour of Romania’s entry into the war against Austria-Hungary in the spring of 1915.²⁰

10. I. G. Duca, *Memorii*, 72.

11. *Universul*, 1914, 242.

12. *Universul*, 1914, 245.

13. *Adevărul*, 1914, 9874. Constantin Nuțu, *România în anii neutralității (1914-1916)* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1972), 134.

14. The National Archives of Romania, Collection of Microfilms, France, roll 101, part I, 119.

15. *1918 la români. Desăvârșirea unității național-statale a poporului român*. Ediție de documente. (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984, vol. I), 588.

The *Cultural League* and the *National Action* organized a strong campaign of public meetings in the capital and other cities of the country. Participants called strongly for the government to abandon its policy of neutrality and to bring about the liberation of Transylvania. On 15 March, an important meeting was held in Iași with the support of the Cultural League. The demonstrations continued in April. A large gathering was held in Turnu Severin, an occasion for great personalities such as Nicolae Iorga, Nicolae Filipescu, Ion Grădișteanu, Take Ionescu, and Vasile Lucaciu to deliver mobilizing speeches. All speakers advocated for immediate action of Romania against Austria-Hungary.²¹

In the summer of 1915, although the situation on the front was not too advantageous for the Entente, the rallies in favour of Romania's entry into the war continued even if their number was reduced. Thus, the *League for the National Unity of all Romanians*, the *National Action* and the students planned to organize a large meeting on 14 June at the Roman Arenas in Bucharest. It was meant to be "the largest and most impressive demonstration of all the Romanian demonstrations that have ever been seen in Bucharest and by that very fact to be a final and decisive warning for the government and the prelude of Romania's entry into the action with the Entente."²² The protesters hoped that through their vigorous action to influence the final decision adopted by the government. On 30 June 1915, in Dacia room in Bucharest, there was a large national protest. The citizens of the capital responded to the appeal made by the *Cultural League*, the *Carpathians Society*, the *Transylvanian Legion*, the *Patriotic Action*, the *Legion of Bukovina* and the *National Action*. At that protest attended delegations of the *Cultural League* from provincial towns, too.²³

Thus, Romania's relations with France in the first years of Romanian neutrality were not confined only at official, political, diplomatic and military relations. An important part of the Romanian public opinion often expressed feelings of sympathy and admiration for the greatest Latin power of the West. A noteworthy aspect is that the demonstrations took place in many cities of the Romanian Kingdom, which represents an evidence for the great intensity of the action. The Francophile public opinion assiduously campaigned for the country's entry into the war on side of the Entente.

The public opinion in the Kingdom of Romania did not play a decisive role in influencing the final decision of the government, but its manifestations are relevant for Romania's growing sympathy to France, which is undeniable both at official (formal) and informal level.

16. Mircea Mușat, "La Roumanie pendant la période de la neutralité 1914-1916", *Roumanie. Pages d' Histoire* XI. 2-3 (1986): 178.

17. *Universul*, 1915, 39- 40, 42.

18. *Universul*, 1915, 44.

AN INTELLECTUAL DURING THE NEUTRALITY PERIOD C. I. ISTRATI



RALUCA TOMI

Abstract

A hundred years after the Great War historians rethink the activity of the personalities involved in it. This article aims to provide new information about C. Istrati's activity during the neutrality period. President of the Romanian Academy (1913–1916), a recognized personality in the European scientific circles, C.I. Istrati was a constant supporter of the pan-Latinist movement and of the Entente. Based on his unpublished diary and on his correspondence with Romanian and Italian personalities, we try to present: the Istrati's two missions of September 1914 and December 1914 - March 1915, to Italy, France and some of the Balkan states; his opinions regarding the climate of the Romanian Academy during the neutrality period; his opinions about his contemporary politicians.

Keywords

Neutrality period, panlatinism, cultural and „unofficial” missions during the WWI, Romanian Academy, political personalities during the WWI

"LET THIS year be favourable to the Romanian people, to the country, to my family... Let us have peace and progress in morals, administration, church and school"¹, these were the wishes expressed by Dr. C.I. Istrati at the beginning of the year 1914. Unfortunately, history wanted something different.

Born on 5 September 1850, a member of the Istrati Family, of which the man of letters Nicolae Istrati was also part, remembered by his contemporaries because of his anti-union ideas, but also because of the abolitionist ones, Constantin I. Istrati dedicated himself to scientific activities². He obtained in turn his Ph.D. in Medicine and Chemistry; he became a teacher at the Chemistry Department of the Bucharest Faculty of Medicine. The discovery of the "franceines" brought him European notoriety, becoming a member of the Romanian Academy, whose president became in 1913³, and a corresponding member of the Paris Academy of Medicine. Convinced by the role of the scientific education in the formation of the future generations, he founded the Romanian Society of Science, but also the Romanian Association for the Advancement and Dissemination of Science. His passion for history took shape in studies dedicated to female education, to the churches built during the rule of Stephen the Great, but also in the monumental work dedicated to the demographic development and the state of health of the Romanian people, published in 1880. He was a member of the Conservative Party and the Democratic Conservative Party and he was several times the Minister of Education, Industry and Commerce⁴. Like other responsible intellectuals of the age, he got involved in the national fight. He took part as a physician in the Independence War⁵; in 1911, he was a member of the expedition organized by Gh. Munteanu Murgoci to the Aromanian communities south of the Danube⁶; and he was an enthusiastic supporter of the fight for the union with the provinces across the mountains. His passion for history, ethnography and painting took shape in an impressive collection that represented the main part of the Turnu Severin Museum, the historic documents being preserved in the State archives branch of the above-mentioned town⁷.

1. C. Istrati, *Jurnal*, The Romanian National Library (hereinafter RNL), mss. 27970, January 1, 1914 (hereinafter *Jurnal*).
2. Gabriel Dichter, *Doctorul C.I.Istrati. Intim* (București: Institutul de arte grafice Carol Göbl, 1907), 7 (hereinafter *Doctorul C.I.Istrati. Intim*); see also Istrati's request to Bacău city for a grant to study in Paris, RNL, mss. no. 10 858.
3. *Academia Română Discursuri de recepție*, III, ed. by Dorina Rusu (București: Editura Academiei Române, 2005), 420–421.
4. I. Jianu, G. Vasiliu, *Dr. C.I.Istrati* (București: Editura Științifică, 1964), 186.
5. *Doctorul C.I.Istrati. Intim*, 17–20.
6. Raluca Tomi, "Un geolog pasionat de Balcani și modernizarea societății românești: Gh. Munteanu Murgoci (1872 – 1925)", *Studii și materiale de istorie modernă*, XXVII (2014): 107–149.
7. General Direction of the State Archives in Romania, *Colecția dr. Constantin I. Istrati (1429 – 1945), Inventar arhivist* 13 (București, 1988), 6.

In this article, we would like to show his activity in the neutrality period of Romania, based on the unpublished information of his journal and his personal correspondence. Preserved among the manuscripts of the Romanian National Library, Istrati's diary begins in the year 1906, when he organised the jubilee of King Carol I, and ends in the year 1917. Among the issues he approached in his journal, we shall focus on: Istrati's two missions of September 1914 and December 1914 - March 1915, to Italy, France and some of the Balkan states; we shall render his opinions regarding the climate of the Romanian Academy during the neutrality period; we shall convey some of his opinions about his contemporary politicians.

Dr. C.I. Istrati was known in the European circles for his activity of promoting the Latin League, a project that started to gain ground firstly on the cultural level, in the second half of the 19th century. Around World War I, when Pan-Germanism was characterised by an aggressive propaganda, there was an attempt of forming a Latin League. Before the Great War, there were in Bucharest several cultural associations or societies which aimed to consolidate the relations with France and Italy, with all the Latin states. Dr. C.I. Istrati was the president of the Latin Association in Bucharest. He had been planning even since 1910 to erect the statue of Trajan on the Column, and the following year he formed a commission to celebrate the semi-centenary of Italy and to appeal for the erection of a replica of the Trajan Column in Bucharest⁸. The initiative was taken up again in 1914, with the reorganisation of the Latin Association. At the beginning of 1914, this was expanding by the co-optation of the Franco-Romanian League. The elected president was C.I. Istrati, vice-presidents: Al. Tell, George Diamandy; corresponding secretaries for France: Elena Văcărescu in Paris and François Lebrun in Bucharest, and for Italy: Elena Bacaloglu in Rome and Ramiro Ortiz in Bucharest⁹. In France, the Romanian students supported the activity of the association in the country, they grouped around the magazine "Tribune Roumaine" and they founded a Romanian office of political information, headed by Mircea-Russu Șirianu¹⁰. In May 1914, the president of the Latin Association was communicating its objectives: to erect a bronze Column in Bucharest, ending with the statue of emperor Trajan, a monument that would be inaugurated in 1916¹¹; to interchange students and teachers, to organise conferences, trips to the Latin countries, commercial and industrial exhibitions, to tighten commercial and cultural relations to the Latin states¹². In the summer of 1914, C. Brâncoveanu was co-opted among the leaders and, as honorary members, there were elected: His Royal

8. C.I. Istrati, *Apel către românii de pretutindeni*, 16/29 martie 1911, RNL, Saint Georges Fund, ds. 635, f. 170; see also RNL, mss. 10 857.

9. *Neamul Românesc* 2 (January 19, 1914): 2-3.

10. The Romanian Academy Library (hereinafter RAL), A 1401, 870-871.

11. *Columna lui Traian* 1 (May 26, 1914): 1-2 (hereinafter, *Columna*)

12. *Columna*, 3 - 4.

Highness the Duke Alphonse de Bourbon – the Prince of Spain, General Joaquin de la Have, Gabriele D’Annunzio, Alberto Lumbroso, Jean Carrère, G. Lacour-Gayet, General Pelecier, André Tardieu, etc.¹³.

An ardent supporter of the national idea, which was closely related to the triumph of the Latin states, declared in the press, in the conferences of the Athenaeum, in front of the Romanian Society of Science, it is understandable why in September 1914 and December 1914–March 1915, C.I. Istrati was sent on “official” missions to Italy and France in order to sound out the political circles and the public opinion regarding the neutrality of Romania and Italy, in relation to the possibility of a concomitant intervention. The Declaration of Neutrality allowed Brătianu’s Government to start negotiations with the Entente and to prepare from a military and diplomatic point of view the entry of Romania into war. The missions which Istrati was part of, although not openly supported by the Government, were carried out with its knowledge. In those days of uncertainty, confusion and pressure, Brătianu’s Government wanted to know the opinion of Italy, whose position was similar to that of Romania: an ally of the Central Powers, but which had declared its neutrality and whose interests could only be achieved by joining the Entente. We can compare the missions of Istrati to those of Vasile Alecsandri in 1859, who had been sent by Prince Cuza to sound out the Cabinets of Turin, Paris and London regarding the union of the principalities. In the specialized literature, Istrati’s missions were mentioned, but without knowledge of the details of the conversations he had with the politicians he met. Their importance results from his diary and his correspondence with Emil Costinescu, the liberal Minister of Finance, and an ardent supporter of the Entente. On August 22/September 4, 1914 Istrati wrote in his diary: „it is decided, tomorrow I am leaving for Italy”¹⁴. The following day, before leaving, he met the king’s aid-de-camp, the colonel Paul Angelescu, who strengthened his faith in the victory of the Entente, “for the good of Latinity, of humanity, of civilisation”¹⁵. The first mission of Istrati, which Iorga described as “one of the most secret of the public missions and also one of the most public of the secret missions”, appears to have been initiated by Dr. Ion Cantacuzino, with the agreement of Nicolae Filipescu, Emil Costinescu, Take Ionescu. Financially, the mission was supported by the mentioned personalities and its members carried recommendation letters from the French and Russian ambassadors in Bucharest¹⁶. Istrati, who had been since 1913 the presi-

13. *La Roumanie* 4494 (8/21 iunie 1914): 1.

14. *Jurnal*, mss. 27962.

15. *Jurnal*, mss 27 962, 23 August 1914.

16. Ion Bulei, *Arcul așteptării. 1914, 1915, 1916* (București: Editura Eminescu, 1981), 84 (hereinafter *Arcul așteptării*); see also Constantin Bușe, “Des interférences politico-diplomatiques roumano-italiennes pendant les années 1914–1916”, in *Istorie și societate. Culegere de studii de istorie modernă și contemporană*. Ed. C. Bușe and Ileana Căzan (București: Editura Universității,

dent of the Romanian Academy, was accompanied in his mission by the director of the National Theatre and the president of the Society of Writers, George Diamandy¹⁷. They left for Italy, with stops in Thessaloniki, Piraeus, Naples. In Rome, Istrati met the English ambassador who made him a positive impression „an intelligent and refined man who sees clearly and has great confidence in the future of Italy”¹⁸. However, he found the French ambassador, Camille Barrère, fearful and visionless¹⁹. He was also received by Prime Minister Antonio Salandra, who “said nothing, just laughed sheepishly all the time”. Nevertheless, he was impressed by the foreign affairs undersecretary, Luigi Borsarelli Di Rifreddo, “the man who judges and thinks day by day”. Istrati’s opinion was that Italy was not going to stay neutral for long and that it wanted the Tyrol, Trieste, the port of Vlore and especially Albania²⁰. The visit of the two Romanians reverberated in the Italian press and among the men of letters²¹. Roberto Galli, a renowned publicist and Italian politician, wrote to Istrati and Diamandy on 19 September 1914 reminding them about his activity in the defence of the Romanian rights, starting with the involvement in Garibaldi’s plans of 1875 to support the fight for independence of the Balkan states, and ending with the support of the Aromanian issue²². In the end, he saluted the wisdom of the Romanian Governments that turned Romania into the wise mediator of the Balkan states’ policy. The visit was also mentioned in the letter of 28th September of Antonio Baldacci, an illustrious botanist and geographer of the Balkan area, which was addressed to Istrati: “we must build the Latin bridge from the Adriatic to the Danube; a strong Latin wall between the Carpathians and the Apennines, crossing the Balkans, without which Romania itself could suffer”. In the same letter, he offered his services to become the consul of Romania in Bologna²³.

Istrati’s second mission of December 1914 - March 1915 was to combine the activity of cultural propaganda with that of sounding out the political circles in Sofia, Belgrade, Rome and Paris with respect to the entry of Romania into war and to the projects of forming a Balkan block. The involvement of the Government

2000), 128; Dorel Buşe, *Relațiile politico-diplomatice româno-italiene în perioada afirmării principiului naționalităților în Europa centrală și de sud-est* (București: Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare „Carol I”, 2007), 44 – 46.

17. *Arul așteptări*, 116.

18. *Jurnal*, mss. 27962, 4 September 1914.

19. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 962, 6 September 1914.

20. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 962, 5 September 1914.

21. Eugeniu Cristoforeanu, “Opinia publică italiană și guvernul”, *Universul* 284 (15 October 1914): 1; Emil Nicolau, “Interview cu dl. G. Diamandy”, *Universul* 285 (16 October 1914): 1.

22. Roberto Galli to Istrati and Diamandy, 19 September 1914, Roma, RAL, Istrati’s correspondence, S 6/DCLXX.

23. National Central Historical Archives (hereinafter NCHA), Istrati’s personal archive, ds. 10, 28 September 1914, Rome.

in the organisation of the mission was more visible. At the end of November 1914, Alexandru Constantinescu, liberal Minister, called Istrati, together with Ion Cantacuzino and G. Diamandi. I.G. Duca, Constantin I. Angelescu and other officials of the Statistics Department were also present. They were given documents regarding the nationalities of Transylvania, ethnographic maps of Hungary and reports regarding the limits of the territorial claims of Romania. Each member of the mission was to receive 8 000 francs, and the legations in France and Italy were to receive propaganda funds²⁴. Istrati left for Bulgaria, Serbia, Italy and France, while Ion Cantacuzino with G. Diamandi, for France.

The first stage of the Istrati's mission was to sound out the Bulgarian and Serbian circles. In Sofia, he met the ambassadors of France, Greece, Russia, and Italy. The latter knew very well "our affairs and was making a lot of efforts for the Bulgarian-Romanian agreement". He was very pleased with the patriotism of the members of the Romanian legation, especially reminding Alexandru Gurănescu²⁵. As for the Bulgarian officials he met, among which the Prime Minister, Vasil Radoslavov, Istrati had the impression, erroneous in fact, that they were starting to see the identity of interests with the Romanians. In the letter, he addressed to Minister Emil Costinescu, in which he related the meetings with the Bulgarian ministers, and wrote: "my impression is: we shall be able to reach an agreement with the Bulgarians"²⁶. Reaching Nis, on 7th December, he was impressed by the great number of injured people and refugees. The following day, Prime Minister Nicola Pasici received him and the conversation was very open. Istrati told him that Romania had been "the guard of Serbia", it had defended its borders against the Bulgarian danger. As for the Balkan Block project, supported by the Entente, by means of which it wanted to get Bulgaria out of the influence of the Central Powers, the Serbian Prime Minister was very reticent. In his opinion, the Balkan Block could be formed after having satisfied the territorial claims of Bulgaria, which meant territorial concessions from its neighbours Romania, Serbia and Greece. Prime Minister Pasici told him "we could not alienate without the certainty of victory, some of our provinces". At the other proposal of Istrati, which regarded the establishment of a neutral territory from Midia, Radosto (Tekirdag), Constantinople, with the latter turned into a free port of the Balkan Block, the Serbian Prime Minister answered that Russia had great interests in the area²⁷. In the summary he made for Costinescu, Istrati presented the military weakness of

24. *Arcul așteptării*, 144; see also Adrian Butnaru, "File din viața unei familii. Frații Constantin și George Diamandi în preajma și vremea Primului Război Mondial", in *Gândirea Militară Românească*, 1 (2013): 143.

25. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 962 (7 December 1914).

26. Istrati to Emil Costinescu, Rome, 17/30 December 1914, RAL, Istrati's correspondence, S 27(2)/DCLXXIII; see also *Jurnal*, mss. 27 962, 6 December 1914.

27. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 962, 8 December 1914.

Serbia that could not resist much longer the Austro-Hungarian armies and he considered that Romania should enter immediately into war: “our inactivity so far, no matter what excuse we may have, has damaged us more than we could think”²⁸. After Nis, Istrati’s following stop was Thessaloniki, where he visited the Ottoman Commercial School, where the majority of the students were Aromanians, an opportunity to remember the duty of Romania towards our brothers in the Balkans²⁹. In the trip to Italy he was accompanied by Father Vasile Lucaci and Charles and Noel Baxton, those who had survived an assassination attempt in Bucharest. The British confessed to Vasile Lucaci that England’s interest was for a Greater Hungary that would counterbalance the Russian danger. England did not trust either Romania or a potential Balkan treaty, since it would be under the moral influence of the Orthodox Russia³⁰.

In Italy, the target of Istrati’s mission was to sound out the political circles for a common Italian-Romanian intervention on the side of the Entente. The Romanian ambassador, Prince Dimitrie Ghyka, facilitated the meetings with King Victor Emmanuel III and Prime Minister Antonio Salandra. During the 50 minutes audience with the King of Italy, Istrati spoke to him about the Romanians of Pindus, of Hungary and of Bulgaria. The King asked about the Royal Family of Romania, about the life of the Italian families in Romania and told him that he enjoyed receiving the works of the Romanian Academy, since he was an ardent botanist. Istrati found the King “very discouraged and lacking faith in the future”. The Italians do not seem “very warlike ... But, what is much worse, is that they do not consider their duty to contribute to this confrontation, which is for civilisation, for Latinity”³¹. It is worthy of note that, in the same period, Vasile Rudeanu, the head of the Superior Department of Munitions who was responsible for supplying the Romanian army with armaments and munitions was also in Italy and he was received by the King, the Prime Minister and the Minister of War³². On 24th December, Istrati was received by Vincenzo Riccio, Minister of Post and Telecommunications. They talked about the necessity of Romania entering into war as soon as possible “since the Russians tend to occupy the Romanian borders”. The Italian Minister considered that Italy would also enter into war and understood why Romania addressed Rome, which was not only the capital of Italy, but also of the Latinity³³.

28. Istrati to Costinescu, Rome, 17/30 December 1914, RAL, Istrati’s correspondence, S 27(2)/DCLXXIII.

29. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 962, 11 December 1914.

30. Istrati către Costinescu, Rome, 17/30 December 1914, RAL, Istrati’s correspondence, S 27(2)/DCLXXIII.

31. *Jurnal*, 27962, Roma, 21 December 1914 / 3 January 1915.

32. General Vasile Rudeanu, *Memorii. Din timpuri de pace și de război 1884 – 1929*. Eds. Dumitru Preda, Vasile Alexandrescu (București: Cavaliotti, 2004), 71–75.

33. *Jurnal*, mss. 27962, 24 December 1914, 1915.

On 25 December 1914, Istrati had an audience with the Pope. The audience was arranged by Prince Vladimir Ghica. He described in his journal the emotion he felt when he stepped into the Vatican Palace. He was impressed by the nine halls he passed through, lined in red silk, with white curtains framed by blue hangings. He was received by Benedict XV in the library and the audience lasted two hours and a half. Istrati spoke to him about the problem of the Romanians in Transylvania, underlining that “we have neither the mind nor the interest to disturb the Catholics in Transylvania”. After the papal audience, Istrati was also received by Cardinal Pietro Gasparri, State Secretary, who was an adept of the Latin idea. From him he found out about the existence of an Austrian Mission to Vatican that wanted the Holy See to intervene for the maintenance of the Habsburg Dynasty³⁴.

There were other two important meetings for Istrati’s mission in Italy: one with Ferdinando Martini, Minister of the Colonies, and the other with Sidney Sonnino, Minister of Foreign Affairs. When Istrati said that Romania was forced to enter into war, also thinking about the future peace, Martini answered that Italy would be ready soon and Bucharest would be announced at the right moment. Istrati pleaded that Italy should become a Balkan power by taking the Dalmatian Coast, in order to consolidate the Latin element in the area. He promised that after the visit to Paris, he would come back for a new audience³⁵. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sonnino, received him excellently: “we sat on a little sofa by the chimney, since it was rather cold. We had a view over the Vatican and Rome. I related to him quietly, clearly, but with patriotism, our entire action”. Istrati told him that he was the adept of the entry into war at any cost, in order to lend support to France and to “ensure our future”. The Minister answered that he understood the difficult situation of Romania and admitted that to Italy it would have been beneficial the existence of a greater and stronger Romania. Unfortunately, he could not tell him anything for sure³⁶.

In his diary, Istrati showed the confuse situation of the public opinion of Italy, the oscillating positions of the Government, that were also felt in the activities of some cultural associations. Thus, the Italian-Romanian League, headed by Ernesto Artom, had to postpone his conferences because of the pressure made by Prince von Bülow, the German Ambassador to Rome. The suspicions appeared following an interview that Istrati gave for the newspaper „Il Messaggero”, where the Romanian showed openly his pro-French position. Dimitrie Ghika warned

34. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 962, 25 December 1914, 1915.

35. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 962, 28 December 1914, 1915.

36. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 962, 30 December 1914 / 12 January 1915; about the Italian political debate see also Roberto Reali, “Gli intellettuali italiani nel dibattito sull'intervento nella prima guerra mondiale”, in *Război și societate în secolul XX*. Ed. Gheorghe Mândrescu, Girodano Altarozzi (Cluj-Napoca, Roma: Accent, 2007), 45–67.

37. Dimitrie Ghica to C.I. Istrati, February 1915, NHCA, Istrati’s personal archive, ds. 10/II.

him that “his war-smelling statements” embarrassed many people in Rome³⁷. Annoyed by the equivocal and mistrustful position that dominated Rome, Istrati drew the attention of Costinescu to the Italian press. This had to be “persuaded” with nice amounts, to favour Romania. He reminded of Roberto Fava, who was not receiving any subvention and he was writing articles in “Concordia” that favoured the Hungarians, and of Vico Mantegazza, who was a Bulgarian agent, but wanted to issue a periodical that would defend our interests and needed 10 000 lei³⁸.

On 9 January 1915 he was reaching Paris, a city plunged into darkness for fear of the zeppelins³⁹. The mission of the Romanians did not count on the support of the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Emanoil Porumbaru, which generated confused attitudes from our representative in Paris, Alexandru Emanoil Lahovary. Istrati wrote in his journal that part of the French politicians considered the Romanians “false and undecided” because they were delaying their entry into war⁴⁰. However, others were favourable to us, such as Théophile Delcassé, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Istrati obtained an audience with him, who seemed to be a “superior person, sharp mind, clear words, decided nature”, vivid and pleasant, an ardent advocate of the agreement with Italy. Delcassé spoke with admiration about Visconti-Venosta, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, who had died in 1914. He confessed that France was willing to reach a written agreement with Italy and he seemed extremely favourable to Romania. Thus, one of the objects of Istrati’s missions was reaching its goal: “I endeavoured to create an approach between France and Italy in what concerns the Latinity issue, hoping that we could propel Italy to come into action along with us... With Mr. Delcassé I had a one-hour-and-a-half-meeting and I was delighted to see not only the clear and determined judgement, but also the close knowledge of our circumstance itself”. At the end of the audience, he charged Istrati, on his return to Rome, with communicating Sonnino the availability of France towards Italy and he tried to convince him “that we have nothing to fear from Russia, which would surely yield to us Bukovina up to the Siret”⁴¹. The last phrase was meant to calm down the circles in Bucharest that felt threatened by the presence of the Russian troops in Bukovina⁴².

The impression the Italian representative in Paris, Tommaso Tittoni, gave him was however different “old fox, a reserved and insincere person and, of course, no

38. Istrati to Emil Costinescu, Rome, 22 December 1915, RAL, Istrati’s correspondence, S 27(3)/DCLXXIII.

39. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 961, 9 January 1915.

40. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 961, 10 January 1915.

41. *Jurnal*, mss 27961, 15 January 1915; see also Istrati to Emil Costinescu, Paris, 4 February 1915 RAL, Istrati’s correspondence S 27 (4)/DCLXXIII

42. *Arcul aşteptării*, 94.

43. *Jurnal*, 19 January 1915, mss. 27 961.

lover of France”⁴³. Officially, the presence of Istrati in Paris was due to the invitation to participate in the great celebration of Latinity, organised at Sorbonne. Presided by the president of the Chamber of Deputies, Paul Deschanel, the assembly gathered almost 3 000 participants, among which there were the members of the Institute of France, political leaders and members of the diplomatic body. Speeches were delivered by Andreas Andreades, a professor of the University of Athens, C. Istrati, President of the Romanian Academy, Xavier de Carvalho, President of the Portuguese Society of Education, Vicente Blasco Ibanez, a Spanish novelist, General Reyes, a former President of the Republic of Colombia, the representative of Latin America, Ernest Martinenche, a professor at the Sorbonne, Roland de Mares, the representative of Belgium, Gabriele D’Annunzio and Guglielmo Ferrero, the representatives of Italy, Ernest Lavisse, from the French Academy. There were recited poems written especially for the occasion by D’Annunzio (*Ode pour la ressurection latine*) and by Jean Richepin (*Aux latins*)⁴⁴. Istrati’s conference was a success. This is what he confessed in his journal: “Yesterday was the most beautiful day I have ever had. I delivered the conference well, the public was very nice and I felt the happiness of having done something for my country!”⁴⁵ Under the title *La Roumanie, Son Passé, Son Présent et Son Avenir*, C.I. Istrati made a compact synthesis of the Romanian customs that reminded of the Roman tradition. He argued for the fight to defend Christianity in The Middle Ages and he enumerated the Romanian men of letters who had become part of the European patrimony. He spoke about the Romanians who lived outside the borders in Transylvania, Banat, Bukovina, South of the Danube, Bessarabia, he presented the Romanian personalities that were involved in the culture of the neighbouring peoples and last but not least, he showed the economic development of the kingdom. All these made of the Romanian people an outstanding representative of Latinity⁴⁶. The sojourn in France occasioned the meeting with high representatives of the Latin culture, to whom he proposed the building of a Temple of Latinity in Leuven, as a memorial to the Belgium martyrdom⁴⁷. Istrati was pleased with the way he had been received by the French cultural and political circles. He wrote to Costinescu: “here things are going well, the Government and the country are doing their duty and trust is absolute”. The fact that he was also carrying other instructions from the country results from the following passage: “please, make them understand at the Ministry of War that they should urgently order as much explosive as possible, since the

44. *Pour la civilisation latine. Manifestation au grand amphithéâtre de la Sorbonne, 12 février 1915*, Paris: Librairie Plon-Nourrit, 1915.

45. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 961, 24 January 1915.

46. C. I. Istrati, *La Roumanie, Son Passé, Son Présent et Son Avenir* (Paris: Editions de la Revue politique et littéraire et de la revue scientifique, 1915), 32 p.

47. *Jurnal*, mss 27 961.

48. Istrati to Emil Costinescu, Paris, 4 February 1915, RAL, Istrati’s correspondence, S 27 (4)/DCLXXIII.

quantity that is used (in France) is very large”⁴⁸.

From Paris he went back to Italy, where he was to deliver a conference about Romania and the Latinity, but he also had other goals he confessed in a letter to Costinescu, on 4 February 1915. “All my actions in Rome shall be for Italy to enter into war along with us, since this is the only way in which things can occur with less sacrifice on our part. I can tell you that their delay is due to the need to prepare better the artillery and that most certainly, at the end of February, they are determined to show more energy”⁴⁹. In another letter, he was sure about the entry of Italy into war “on 15th March according to our calendar, at the latest” and he pointed out the bad faith of Carlo Fasciotti, the representative of Italy in Bucharest, who was avoiding an approach between France and Italy, being part of the anti-French financial circles⁵⁰.

The first personality he visited upon his return from Rome was Bruto Amante, who had many books about Romania and the Latinity⁵¹. He was to deliver a conference at the Artistic-Literary Society of Rome, *La Roumanie dans la latinité*. It was a special, argued presentation on the Latin origin of the Romanian people. He concluded saying that “we are proud to be called the Belgium of the Orient, in the circumstances of the anti-German resistance”, and Romania was ready to have its contribution to the victory of the Latin civilisation⁵². The public appreciated the conference. Ettore Pais, the illustrious historian and epigraphist, the president of the assembly, emphasised in his speech: “the greater Italy is, the safer the existence of Romania. Romania is an integrating part of Latinity. It is a furthestmost citadel that must be defended”⁵³. Upon his return to the country, Istrati wrote to Pais to thank him for what he had done for the cause of Latinity, and for the conference about Romania that he had delivered in Rome at the Italian-Romanian League. In Romania, all the eyes were on Italy and he was sure that the Romanian-Italian arms had something to say at the future peace conference⁵⁴. The favourable echo of Istrati’s conference in Rome was also confessed in the letter of Lando Landini, a professor at the University of Padua, who wrote that Italy had to break off from Austria and that Romania and Italy had to fulfil their destinies⁵⁵.

The missions C.I. Istrati participated in were initiated by the pro-Entente circles, secretly supported by Government members, initiators of the negotiations

49. *Ibidem*.

50. Istrati to Emil Costinescu, Paris, 24 January 1915 RAL, Istrati’s correspondence, S 27(5)/DCLXXI-II.

51. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 961, Roma, 8 February 1915.

52. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 961, 16 February 1915; Istrati, *La Roumanie dans la latinité*, Roma: Tipografia dell’Unione Editrice, 1915, 22.

53. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 961. Another two letters from Ettore Pais to Istrati in RAL, correspondence Istrati, S 22 (1)/1915 and S 22 (2)/DCLXXVIII.

54. Istrati to Ettore Pais, RNL, Saint-Georges Fund, ds. 630, f. 12.

55. Lando Landini to Istrati, Padova 1 April 1915, RAL, Istrati’s correspondence S 45/DCLXXV.

with the Entente powers. Besides their declared cultural character, the participation in the conferences, in the great celebration of Latinity in Paris also had the purpose of investigating the opinions of the Cabinets of Sofia, Belgrade, Rome and Paris regarding the eventual intervention of Romania in the war, its national claims, the material support expected from France and Italy. C.I. Istrati remained up to the end an adept of the immediate action of Romania on the side of France and Italy. The idea also appears in his will: "I leave to my children the duty to love their country, to be hard-working and honest. If fate wanted for the Romanians a truncated country, then they should go to France, the country of honesty and duty, the country of true patriotism and humanity and there they should fight to death for their people"⁵⁶.

President of the Romanian Academy and professor at the Bucharest Faculty of Medicine, C.I. Istrati joined unconditionally, from the very beginning of the conflict, those who declared themselves in favour of the immediate intervention on the side of the Entente. He signed the document of the university professors of 26 October 1914, submitted to King Ferdinand, in which they spoke about the historic and civilising mission of the Romanians and they requested the immediate break from Austria-Hungary⁵⁷. Consequently, he was part of the National Action and of the League for political unity of all Romanians, both pro-Entente organisations, he delivered numerous conferences under their patronage, he wrote articles in the press, where he declared himself firmly in favour of the intervention of Romania in the war on the side of the Entente⁵⁸. His entries in the journal regarding the members of the Romanian Academy and their attitude with respect to the conflict are very interesting. Soon after the death of King Carol, he declared his opinion indirectly in front of the members of the Academy and the Royal Couple Ferdinand-Mary: "Henceforward through culture, since it really toughens the characters, the beliefs, it leads to sacrifices till death itself, willingly harboured for the people and for the truth"⁵⁹. He was re-elected in 1915 president of the high institution of culture, occasion on which he spoke to his fellows about the backward state of the Romanian education. His speech was also an appeal to hard work, since "in our country work is seen as slavery, as fatigue and not as a happiness of the soul"⁶⁰. Freshly returned from France, in the spring of 1915, where he had participated in the enthusiastic celebration of Latinity, the envi-

56. C. Istrati, *Testament*, RAL, Istrati's personal archive, II acte 53 – 56, Vaslui, 27 Novembre 1916.

57. *Acțiunea Universitară în chestia națională* (București: Tipografia profesională Dimitrie C. Ionescu, 1914), 11.

58. *Arcul așteptării*, 135–136; Radu Tudorancea, *Frontul de acasă. Propagandă, atitudini și curente de opinie în România primului război mondial* (București: Editura Eikon, 2015), 71.

59. C.I. Istrati, *Cuvinte de bună venire adresate Maiestăților lor Regelui și Reginei* (București, 1915), 10.

60. C. Istrati, *Discurs realegere în funcția de președinte al Academiei române, 27 mai 1915*, in RAL, Istrati's personal archive, II mss.2

ronment of the Academy was terrifying him by its lack of involvement and of reaction towards the contemporary historic events. Moreover, he was aware that among the members of the Academy it dominated the pro-German current, thus, he wrote harshly in his diary: “At the Academy the hateful current of the pro-Germans is getting stronger. I have never thought that in the first pure Romanian institution, there would be so many... bastards. Neither character, nor patriotism.”⁶¹ It is known that from among the academicians, those who sensed which was the way for Romania to win the conflict and participate in the peace conference on the side of the winners, there were: Barbu Ștefănescu Delavrancea, Nicolae Iorga, A.D.Xenopol, Gen. Grigore Crăiniceanu, Gh. Marinescu, Gh. Țițeica and of course, C.I. Istrati. It was not a coincidence that on 3 September 1916 Istrati proposed that 50% of the pay of the academicians should be donated to the state. Iorga went forward and proposed that the academicians should completely give up their pay, their royalties and even the salaries of the secretaries⁶². It was the moment when the Academy could rightfully be called “the virtual image of Greater Romania”, as Delavrancea called it in his famous speech *The war and our duty*⁶³.

In Istrati's journal, there can be found portraits of his contemporaries: P.P. Carp was intransigent, but honest⁶⁴; Take Ionescu was an admirable orator, a visionary, but lacking depth⁶⁵. His opinion about Ionel Brătianu was not favourable, since he was his political adversary, but also the one who temporized the entry of the country into war. Istrati was part of the group of the impatient ones, who were making pressures on Brătianu to enter into war on the side of the Entente. The Prime Minister tried in an audience, on 10 May 1915, to calm down his impatience. He told him he did not trust Russia, that they had to move prudently and that he was ready to shoot himself if “the country suffered consequences”. Brătianu also told him that the role of Romania “was not a secondary one and that he would do everything possible to obtain what was rightful, since he was not asking for anything that would offend the Russians or the allies, or the Serbians either”⁶⁶. Nevertheless, the accusations of Sphinx and Padishah, directed at the Prime Minister, are very frequent in his journal⁶⁷. “What a terrible year I have lived in 1915! I am grey-haired, disappointed, sorrowful, with very little trust in our future”, wrote Istrati, without knowing that the following period was going to put him to painful trial⁶⁸. The entry of Romania into war invigorated him. On 17 August

61. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 965, 2 May 1915.

62. *Jurnal*, mss 27 964, 3 September 1916.

63. Barbu Ștefănescu Delavrancea, *Războiul și datoria noastră, ședința publică a Academiei din 2 septembrie 1916* (București, 1916), 28.

64. *Jurnal*, mss. 28 377, 17 March 1907

65. *Jurnal*, mss. 27 965, 4 November 1915, see also mss. 27 967, 27 April 1913.

66. *Jurnal*, mss 27695, 11 May 1915.

67. *Jurnal*, mss 27695, 16 September 1915, 2 October 1915.

68. *Jurnal*, mss 27 694, 1 January 1916.

1916, he was in Predeal to see the remains of the battles and three days later, he congratulated Brătianu for his success in Transylvania. He recognized his merits with fair play: “the man is a master of the situation, but an absolute master... We must admit that nobody else could have kept things so entangled in order to fool the Germans and get ourselves prepared. I admit that the moment is well chosen and that nobody else could have defended the interests of the country better than he did.”⁶⁹ The euphoria of the victory was ephemeral. In Istrati’s journal there are related the years of war, the retreat to Moldavia, his last task as Minister of Industry and Commerce. Unfortunately, just like Nicolae Filipescu and Barbu Delavrancea, C. Istrati died before the Great Union, in Paris, in January 1918.

The journal of C.I. Istrati is still a source, which has not been explored by the Romanian historians, which brings new information about the diplomatic activity of the neutrality period and reflects the state of spirit of the politicians who during the neutrality period had to solve dilemmas on which depended the survival of the Romanian State. There were moments of intense concern, expressed by Nicolae Iorga: “what if out of all these misfortunes, out of this tremor there shall not be born a new world? Because you can imagine what a terrible thing it would be if after all these sacrifices, after all these damages, there resulted an even worse future world. It is, doubtlessly, the most terrifying thought that has crossed people’s minds at this time”.

69. *Journal*, mss 27 694, 20 August 1916.

VOX CLAMANTIS IN DESERTO

The German and French Peace Movements and the Difficult Dream of Peace during the Great War



MARIUS-MIRCEA MITRACHE

Abstract

In 1915 on the home fronts of the belligerent countries pressure was mounting against those who did not support the war effort especially the pacifist movements opposing the slaughter between neighbourhood nations. France and Imperial Germany, when it came to dealing with their pacifist movements acted in a similar manner to discourage and neutralize a discourse seen dangerous and counter-productive. The German and French pacifist movements shared a common goal of peace, but they envisioned this goal through the lenses of their national interest and biased beliefs regarding each other. The peace movements themselves were plagued by inner rivalries that fragmented and ultimately weakened their message. The aim of this article is to explore the differences and similarities between the German and French peace movements, the dynamics between themselves and their governments, and to try to understand changes they went through and how it influenced them for the interwar period that followed, the dream of peace remaining one difficult to achieve.

Keywords

Pacifism, nationalism, Franco-German relations, World War One, censorship

Origins of the Historiographic Interest on the French and German Peace Movements

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY regarding the French and German peace movements experienced a pronounced revival among historians and researchers at the beginning of the 1980s as a consequence of the particular geopolitical backdrop of that Cold War period, concerning the so-called Euro-missiles crises. As a consequence of the Soviet Union's decision to deploy SS20 missiles in Eastern Europe, the German chancellor Helmut Schmidt officially demands its NATO and US allies to counterbalance the threats by installing in Pershing II missiles in Federal Germany. Apart from the complex and sometimes even arcane political, military, diplomatic and psychological aspects of the confrontation between the two rival blocks, this Euro-missiles crises brought to the frontline a myriad of vocal and highly engaged peace movements (some of them acting as convenient 'useful idiots' for the Kremlin) spread across all over Western Europe, with Federal Germany as their epicentre. It is on this geopolitical and ideological background that the historians' interest for the historical tradition of the '80 German peace movements is revived, especially following the establishment in Bremen of a *Arbeitskreis Historische Friedensforschung*. Among the pioneering works treating this subject we can mention Karl Holl, Wolfram Wette (eds.) *Pazifismus in der Weimarer Republik* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1981); Karl Holl, Helmut Donat (eds.) *Die Friedensbewegung: organisierter Pazifismus in Deutschland, Österreich und in der Schweiz* (Düsseldorf, Econ Verlag, 1983); Karl Holl, *Pazifismus in Deutschland* (Frankfurt on Main: Suhrkamp, 1988); Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Pazifismus in Deutschland, Dokumente zur Friedensbewegung 1890-1939* (Frankfurt on Main: Fischer, 1988). Concerning the subject of German peace movement as focus of American historians, the most noteworthy are the works of Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and a World without War: The Peace Movement and German Society, 1892-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), or David Welch, *Germany and Propaganda in World War I: Pacifism, Mobilization and Total War* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014).

As for the interest in the French peace movement, it came considerably later, in the early '90 works, partly because of the fact that pacifism had a negative connotation especially in the context of the Franco-German relations, being associated either with defeatism or with collaborationism. A ground-breaking moment regarding French researchers interest in this subject will be the 1993 publication of Maurice Vaisse, Anthony P. Adamthwaite, *Le pacifisme en Europe dès années 1920 aux années 1950* (Bruxelles: Bruylant, 1993). Subsequently, one of the most elaborated and well-documented research works dedicated to a cross-national perspective on the subject belongs to Sophie Lorrain, *Des pacifistes français et allemands, pionniers de l'entente franco-allemande 1870-1925* (Paris: L'Harmattan,

1999), a historical overview emphasizing the fact that the Franco-German pacifist movements laid the groundwork for the two nations' eventual reconciliation after World War II. In a brief survey regarding the Anglo-Saxon approach to the subject, extremely noteworthy are the works of Norman Ingram, *The Politics of Dissent: Pacifism in France 1919-1939*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991; that of Sandi Cooper, "Pacifism in France, 1889-1914: International Peace as a Human Right," *French Historical Studies*, 17/2, 1991; or that of Paul B. Miller, *From Revolutionaries to Citizens: Antimilitarism in France, 1870-1914* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2002).

A House Divided. Nationalism and Pacifism in the Third French Republic

THE GREAT War of 1914-1918 was without doubt a historical cataclysm of biblical proportions. The European nations seemed to be tested like never before in their history. And in that particular time and place, besides warriors and political leaders, there were also prophets of peace whose message of peace and tolerance seemed to fall on fears.

In order to explain why that happened, we need to understand that even before the start of the war, pacifists had a difficult, almost task of imposing their agenda, being either marginalized in the public arena, or completely shut out from any policymaking political position. These aspects were particularly true for the pre-war French and German societies. If the pre-war period is often portrayed like an arms race, it can also be portrayed as a nationalist race, and nowhere else was that nationalist *ethos* raging more than in Paris and Berlin.

The Defeat of Sedan and the Paris Commune that followed at the end of the Franco-Prussian War were the two events that marked the traumatic birth of the Third French Republic. It was a moment of intense political and social turmoil, and the events of those years, especially the rapt of Alsace-Lorraine, haunted the French society until the Great War and beyond. The somewhat naïve image that the French had about Germany, the solely land of Goethe and Kant was soon to vanish in front of the discovery of Bismarck's Germany¹.

Concerning the political reaction to the defeat and the loss of Alsace Lorraine, the Right-wing Conservatives became partisans of peace with Bismarck's Germany. The same went for the Left-wing Republicans, who imbued with the ideals of the French Revolution(s) were forced to renounce their aspirations for an universal Brotherhood of People (*une fraternité des peuples*) and accept a more realistic outlook for their doctrine².

1. For more on this subject see Claude Digeon, *La crise française de la pensée allemande* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956).

2. Jean Defrasne, *Le Pacifisme* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983), 68-69.

So for now there was peace, but it was a bitter peace, one filled with spitefulness and shame. It was a guilty peace that demanded a new political and social consensus that needed to rationalize precisely that feeling of guilt. However, by 1885, there was the coming of age of a generation less influenced by the war, and less eager to accept the burden of this peace. It was a time when that political consensus preached by the founding politicians of the Third French Republic started to wane off and the beginning of a Cult of Revenge, a time when Revenge became the Queen of France, as Charles Maurras gloomily remarked thirty years later when he was describing the unanimously national feeling gathered around this aspiration³.

It was also the moment of birth of two types of French nationalism as historian Michel Winock points out. A Left-wing one, so-called open nationalism that was colonialist and emphasized France's civilizing mission in the world, and a Right-wing one, a closed nationalism, which targeted the enemy within, and was anti-parliamentarian and anti-republican, rejecting the values of the French Revolution of 1789⁴. After the Dreyfus Affair which polarized the French society to an unprecedented level, and in the context of Wilhelm II's *Weltpolitik* (the crises of Tanger in 1905 and of Agadir in 1911 being seen as deliberate provocations), war seemed inevitable⁵.

With the Franco-Russian alliance ending its diplomatic isolation, France's appetite for vindication grew further. The idea of one day taking back Alsace-Lorraine gained the popular support of all social classes. The election in 1913 of a right-leaning Republican, Raymond Poincaré, as president of France was seen as a sign of the nationalistic frenzy that engulfed the country. And it was not a coincidence that some of the first laws he proposed and got voted by the National Assembly were that of the three-year military service⁶.

In France, pacifist ideas appeared firstly in the jurist milieus where they were promoted by personalities like parliamentarians like Frédéric Passy (the first ever recipient of a Nobel Peace Prize) or Paul d'Estournelles de Constant and Léon Bourgeois, who represented France at the Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907, however it should be noted that the latter two did not style themselves as pacifists⁷.

By the turn of the century, pacifism had gained influence in the university milieus where sociologists like Ferdinand Buisson, or physiologists like Charles

3. Raoul Girardet, *Le nationalisme français : anthologie, 1871-1914* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1983), 50.

4. Michel Winock, *Nationalisme, antisémitisme et fascisme en France* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2004), 35-37.

5. Defrasne, *Le Pacifisme*, 70-71.

6. Kevin Rassmore, *The Right in France from the Third Republic to Vichy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 176.

7. Sophie Lorrain, *Des pacifistes français et allemands, pionniers de l'entente franco-allemande 1870-1925* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999), 14.

Richet, or philosophers like Théodore Ruysen exposed their ideas and solutions for achieving the ever elusive world peace⁸. Richet, a physiologist, recipient of the 1913 Nobel Prize for Medicine, and influent professor and College de France⁹, was also a passionate advocate of international arbitration, presiding over the World Peace Congress in Paris. In 1907, the year of the second Hague Peace Conference, he exposed his ideas in a popular book among pacifist milieus, *Le passé de la guerre et l'avenir de la paix*, in which as his biographer Stewart Wolf explains: “Richet discussed the benefits of war over against its costs and losses and pointed out that on biologic, metaphysic, historic, moral, patriotic and even opportunistic grounds war is not profitable.”¹⁰

French pacifism, influenced by the tenets of the so-called *Ecole de Nîmes*, of Protestant extraction, promoted the pacifist ideals of the middle-class through the embodiment of the Peace through Law Association (*L'Association Paix par le Droit*). The *Ecole de Nîmes* was a cooperative movement founded by dedicated Protestant entrepreneurs and economists like Auguste Fabre, Edouard de Boyve or Charles Gide¹¹ (uncle of renowned and Nobel-winning author André Gide) proponents of a form of Social Christianity. The influence of this school of thought was not solely on economic matters but also on social and international issues, and its moral influence combined with the patronage of established pacifists like Frédéric Passy, founder of French Society of Arbitration between Nations, helped a group of young and idealist middle-class young men from the Huguenot bourgeoisie of Nîmes to create, in 1895, the Peace through Law Association. This organization was about to become the powerhouse of French pacifism for the next decades to come.

Frédéric Passy was a towering figure, with impressive pacifist credentials. Born in 1820 in the Parisian upper-bourgeoisie, he belonged to a family of high civil servants that distinguished themselves from the time of Napoleon I. A liberal, Passy was heavily influenced by supporters and theorists of free trade like Frédéric Bastiat and Richard Cobden. Their *laissez-faire* theories led Passy to believe that unrestricted commerce¹² between Nations will eventually lead to a harmonization

8. Defrasne, *Le Pacifisme*, 72-73.

9. Retrospectively, Richet became a controversial figure due to his racism and support of eugenics, having served as president of the French Society for eugenics from 1920 to 1926. A hospital in Val d'Oise, France, which bared his name, was later renamed in 2015 following a petition to remove it.

10. Stewart Wolf, Brain, *Mind and Medecine: Charles Richet and the Origins of Physiological Psychology* (New Brunswick, London: Transaction Publishers, 1993), 117-118.

11. For a more comprehensive view on the life and works of Charles Gide see A. Lavandès, Charles Gide. *Un précurseur de l'Europe unie et de l'ONU. Un apôtre de la coopération entre les hommes* (Uzès: Editions La Capitelle, 1953).

12. This idea that global commerce between Nations and laissez-faire economic principles can ultimately lead to World Peace was summed up in Montesquieu's expression: *Le Doux Commerce* see Catherine Larrère, “Montesquieu et le «doux commerce»: un paradigme du libéralisme”,

of their interests and create a state of peace among them. Other than free-trade solutions, Passy believed that wars and other armed conflicts could be averted if only the public opinion was better informed. And in order to achieve this he proposed vigorous pacifist propaganda directed to enlighten the public through education¹³. This is precisely the aspect which influenced the most the young men of the *Peace through Law Association* under Passy's patronage and mentorship, especially its leader, Théodore Ruysen.

Under the dual influence of Kant's postulates and Passy's ideas of pacifist propaganda, Ruysen advocated for a primacy of Reason over Instinct, promoting a rational pacifism not a sentimental one, and, in order to accomplish those ideals, he aimed at educating the public opinion, while denouncing the popular press and influencing the governments to promote international *juridisme* by rejecting the social-Darwinist theories of the day that claimed that conflicts between Nations are just as inevitable as those between individuals¹⁴. However, Théodore Ruysen had difficulties in establishing a correlation with German pacifists because of the Alsace-Lorraine issue, despite his friendship with Ludwig Quidde, president of the German Peace Society, and ultimately the Peace through Law Association's influence on the French political Establishment and the masses, including the middle-class, remained marginal¹⁵.

An Empire of Subjects. Pacifism in the Militaristic Society of Wilhelmine Germany

THE GERMAN Empire established in 1871 had at its core a strong militaristic *ethos*, which translated into a deeply featured *Reichpatriotismus* in all social classes. This meant a strong loyalty towards the Imperial State and the Kaiser, a cult of military values¹⁶, and a sacralisation of the hierarchical state. Unsurprisingly,

Cahiers d'histoire. Revue d'histoire critique 123 (2014): 21-38, accessed September 7, 2015, url: <https://chrhc.revues.org/3463>.

13. Michael Clinton, "Frédéric Passy: Patriotic Pacifist," *Journal of Historical Biography* 2 (2007): 35-40, accessed September 10, 2015, url: http://journals.ucfv.ca/jhb/Volume_2/Volume_2_Clinton.pdf.
14. Rémi Fabre, "Un exemple de pacifisme juridique: Théodore Ruysen, et le mouvement "La Paix par le Droit" (1884-1950)," *Vingtième Siècle, revue d'histoire* Vol. 39, No. 1 (1993): 40-42, accessed September 12, 2015, doi: 10.3406/xxs.1993.2716.
15. Fabre, "Un exemple de pacifisme juridique", 42.
16. Concerning the subject of militarized society of Wilhelmine Germany see Jost Dülffer, Karl Holl, eds., *Bereit zum Krieg. Kriegsmentalität im wilhelminischen Deutschland 1890-1914* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986) ; Wolfram Wette, *Militarismus in Deutschland. Geschichte einer kriegerischen Kultur* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 2008) ; Wolfram Wette, ed., *Schule der Gewalt, Militarismus in Deutschland 1871-1945* (Berlin: Aufbau-Taschenbuch-Verlag, 2005), Gordon Craig, *Die preußisch-deutsche Armee 1640-1945. Staat im Staate*, (Düsseldorf, Droste Verlag, 1960).

pacifism was seen as an anachronism, as something out of place, a foreign body inside the Fatherland, and eventually pacifists were to be perceived as inner enemies (*Staatsfeinde*)¹⁷. A vivid portrayal of this kind of society of subordination and compliance can be found in Heinrich Mann's novel *Der Untertan* (*The Subject*) which depicts the petty and morally bankrupt life of a spineless social *parvenu* in the chauvinistic Wilhelmine Germany in the wake of World War One.

In this hostile environment, the year 1892 saw the foundation of the German Society for Peace (*Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft*) which had among its founders personalities like Bertha von Suttner, Alfred Hermann Fried, Ludwig Quidde, or Carl von Ossietzky all future recipients of a Nobel Peace Prize. Suttner was mostly a promoter of an aristocratic philanthropic pacifism (*un pacifisme de salon*) but as a woman, it was harder for her to be taken seriously¹⁸. The Austrian writer Stefan Zweig recalls in his memoirs, *The World of Yesterday*, meeting the Baroness in the wake of World War One and being impressed with her relentless dedication to pacifism:

By chance, the very next day I met Bertha von Suttner, that majestic and grandiose Cassandra of our time. An aristocrat of one of the first families, in her early youth she had experienced the cruelty of the War of 1866 in the vicinity of her native family palace in Bohemia. And with the passion of a Florence Nightingale she saw but for one task for herself in life: to hinder a second war or any war at all. She wrote a novel *Lay Down Your Arms* [*Die Waffen nieder!*] which met with universal success; she organized countless pacifist meetings, and the triumph of her life was that she aroused the conscience Alfred Nobel, the inventor of the dynamite to such an extent that to compensate for the evil he had caused with his dynamite, he had established the Nobel Prize for Peace and International Understanding. She came up to me in great excitement [...] the war is already upon us, and once again they have hidden and kept it from us. Why don't you do something you young people? It is your concern most of all. Defend yourselves! Unite!¹⁹

Different to Suttner's good-willed pacifism, Alfred Herman Fried was a proponent of a scientific pacifism, exposing his views in 1894 book, *Friedenskatechismus*, calling for a juridification of the international relations, much in a similar manner to what his French counterparts, Ruyssen, Bourgeois or Paul d'Estournelles Constant, were advocating for. Unlike Baroness von Suttner sentimental pacifism that made based its arguments on emotional grounds, Fried was convinced that war could be avoided only by establishing a judicial international order. He drew

17. Alexandre Dupeyrix, "Les pacifistes dans le Reich wilhelmien (1890-1918) : ennemis de l'Etat ou patriotes ?", *Les Cahiers Irice* Vol.8, No.2 (2011) : 13, accessed September 15, 2015, doi : 10.3917/lci.008.0011.

18. Dupeyrix, "Les pacifistes dans le Reich wilhelmien", 15-16.

19. Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), 208-209.

his inspiration from Kant's *Project for Perpetual Peace* (1795), just as Ruysen did, and predicted that only through international laws, multilateral negotiations and international arbitration institutions could conflicts between States be avoided or at least regulated. Fried's *Weltanschauung* on a judicial international order was really anticipating our present-day one dominated by the UNO or by the now defunct League of Nations during the interwar period. In his *Frieden Katechismus*, he presents his ideas for the creation of institutions such as a World Parliament, a World Postal Office, or an International Bureau for Intellectual Property to name a few, all aimed at creating a global *habitus* of cooperation and concord²⁰. His ideas were much in tune with those expressed by Leon Bourgeois regarding international solidarism which he envisioned as a complex multilayer interdependence among States, thus making armed conflict almost impossible²¹.

Those like Fried essentially believed that peace was a task for the educated and especially for jurists specialized in international relations. At this point a fault-line between two visions of pacifism appears within the German movement. On the one hand, the belief central to the German Peace Society and shared by most of its founders that pacifism should appeal to the masses and should pursue their adhesion. On the other hand, a more elitist approach, articulated by Fried and his brand of scientific pacifism according to which peace is to be reached through eminent technocrats capable of influencing world governments. Precisely for that purpose, Fried together with Otfried Nippold oversaw in 1911 the creation of the *Verband für internationale Verständigung*, comprising mainly experts and specialists in the field of international law²².

Again, similarly to Théodore Ruysen, Fried rejected a Darwinist pessimistic vision of an inevitable violent collision between competing Nations. On this aspect he is heavily influenced by the scholarly works of Russian sociologist Jacob Novikow²³, whose work he translated into German and who preached for growing economic interdependence that would eventually pave the way for a world federation²⁴. As historian Roger Chickering points out:

Fried's „scientific pacifism” was almost entirely unoriginal. It was a restatement of the traditional liberal argument that free trade would create an international community of interests making war impossible. To Cobdenism Fried added some other theories of progress, gleaned principally from Novikow, and arrived at the

20. Dupeyrix, “Les pacifistes dans le Reich wilhelmien”, 8.

21. See Serge Audier, *Léon Bourgeois, Fonder la solidarité* (Paris: Editions Michalon, 2007).

22. Dupeyrix, “Les pacifistes dans le Reich wilhelmien”, 18-19.

23. For more information on the life and works of Jacob Novikow (1849-1912), world-federalist and sociologist whose ideas apparently inspired apart from Alfred H. Fried, also Norman Angell see Alleno Kevin, “Un projet de paix perpétuelle. Fédéralisme et pacifisme chez Jacques Novicow”, *Relations Internationales*, 154 (2013): 7-20.

24. Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and a World Without War: The Peace Movement and German Society, 1892-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 96.

conclusion that the growth of international community, though slow, was inevitable, guaranteed by the laws of society and historical development. The determinism in this ideology was for Fried its most appealing feature. It would enable those who espoused scientific pacifism to style themselves as realists whose program merely affirmed the inevitable²⁵.

Eventually, Fried's postulates were to be enshrined in the first official programme of the German Peace Society when it was voted in 1898 and afterwards published in the Society's magazine, *Die Waffen Nieder!* (named after Bertha von Suttner's famous novel, which in 1899 will be replaced by a new magazine called *Die Friedens-Warte*)²⁶.

The third prominent founder of the German Peace Society, Ludwig Quidde, was born in a wealthy middle-class family in Bremen and later pursued an academic career in Munich becoming a respected scholar on Medieval Germany. Opposing all his life Prussian militarism, in which he saw the enemy of culture, he became a prime figure of the organized pacifism, eventually reaching the position of president of the German Peace Society in 1914, a position he would retain until 1929. His efforts were to be rewarded with the winning of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1927²⁷. Quidde expressed his disaffection with Wilhemine Germany with two controversial publications. The first one, *Der Militarismus im heutigen Deutschen Reich. Eine Anklageschrift*, published anonymously, was a vehement denunciation of the militaristic *ethos* that dominated the society. The second publication, *Caligula. Eine Studie über römischen Cäsarenwahnsinn*, was a thinly disguised satire and attack against Emperor Wilhelm II, which brought him academic isolation and eventually three months of prison in Munich for *lèse-majesté*²⁸. His dislike for the Kaiser was not shared by all his fellow pacifists. For instance, Fried was quite a supporter of the German Emperor, a support which he arduously proclaimed in his 1910 tract *The Emperor and World Peace (Der Kaiser und der Weltfriede)*. Following his persecution, Quidde's engagement for pacifism grew even further working together with Fried, von Suttner and Carl von Ossietzky and establishing professional and personal contacts with French counterparts, most notably Théodore Ruysen²⁹. Quidde worked with Fried, but at times their ideas came into conflict. For instance, Quidde was not so much of a supporter of Fried's scientific pacifism, since he considered that ethics, and not science, should be the foundation of any pacifist endeavour. Quidde agreed that pacifism has a scientific base, but it cannot pass as

25. Chickering, *Imperial Germany and a World without War*, 102.

26. Dupeyrix, "Les pacifistes dans le Reich wilhelmien," 19.

27. Dupeyrix, "Les pacifistes dans le Reich wilhelmien," 28.

28. Chickering, *Imperial Germany and a World Without War*, 86.

29. Dupeyrix, "Les pacifistes dans le Reich wilhelmien," 30.

30. Chickering, *Imperial Germany and a World without War*, 107-108.

a science *per se*, and in return he advocated for a more vibrant promotion of an ethical pacifism³⁰.

Nevertheless despite their efforts combined, the German Peace Society was to remain a fringe organization, largely academic and composed by middle-class liberals, bourgeois pacifists, neither radicals rejecting the Nation-State, nor religious nonconformists, and at the height of their influence having barely 10 000 members³¹ and ultimately with no real influence on the policymaking process, being forced to watch the governments and nations of Europe marching towards war and destruction.

Exile and Surveillance. French Pacifists during World War One

ON 2nd August 1914, on all of France's territory was proclaimed the State of Siege in accordance with the State of Siege Law of 1849. As a result, a number of public powers passed from civilian to military hands³². What followed was a reinforcement of pacifist censorship, the general order being that of: "surveillance of anything that could resemble to peace propaganda".³³ In December 1915, Aristide Briand, at that time Prime Minister, demanded: "the interdiction of all articles for or against the peace, which could examine or discuss the peace conditions"³⁴. The harsh reaction of the French authorities against any pacifist manifestation, that they deemed propaganda, was also a means to cover for their own mistakes and incompetence in waging the war. For instance, in 1917 in the context of the Chemin des Dames³⁵ bloodbath, General Nivelle demanded retaliation on

31. David Welch, *Germany and Propaganda in World War I: Pacifism, Mobilization and Total War* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 143.

32. François Cochet, "Les débuts de la Grande Guerre en France : « dictature » imposée du militaire ou retrait du politique ?", *Revue historique des armées*, 248 (2007): 60-61, accessed September 18, 2015, url : <http://rha.revues.org/1223>.

33. Jean-Jacques Becker, *Les Français dans la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1980,) 49.

34. Jean-Michel Guieu, "« Pour la paix par la Société des Nations »", *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 222 Issue 2 (2006): 90, accessed September 19, 2015, doi : 10.3917/gmcc.222.0089.

35. The Battle of Chemin des Dames (16 April 1917) was one of the bloodiest Franco-German military confrontations on the Western Front. The French army under the command of General Robert Nivelle suffered the most casualties, approximately 187 000 dead and wounded. For the Germans side, which fought under the command of Erich Ludendorff the casualties amounted to approximately 163 000 dead and wounded. The battle was considered a considerable failure for the French, and marked the beginning of the military mutinies (*les mutineries*) and the soldiers' refusal to fight see Pierre Miquel, *Le Chemin des Dames* (Paris: Editions Perrin, 1997); Denis Rolland, *La grève des tranchées : Les mutineries de 1917* (Editions Imago 2005), André Loez, *14-18 Les refus de la guerre: Une histoire des mutins* (Paris: Gallimard, 2010).

36. In original French : "L'accès de fièvre pacifiste, qui sévit à l'intérieur, porte ses premiers germes empoisonnés aux tranchées."

pacifists' propaganda that he believed was undermining the morale of the troops and at the same time, army intelligence rapports were acknowledging that³⁶: "the pacifist fever, which strikes in the inside, is carrying its first poisonous germs to the trenches"³⁷.

In this difficult climate, under constant pressure and supervision from the Secret Services, French pacifists found their escape in Switzerland, a country which became the symbolic fatherland of the pacifist intelligentsia, and a place where they could publish their ideas far from any censorship, Zürich and the shores of Lake Geneva being the choice of their voluntary exile³⁸.

The undisputed leader of this close-knit circle of French exiled pacifists was Romain Rolland, who, in 1916, would receive the Noble Peace Prize for his *Au-dessus de la mêlée*, a pacifist rally cry addressed to the European youth. Again, Stefan Zweig recalls in his memoirs: "Whoever reads the eight pages of the famous *Au-dessus de la mêlée* today will in all probability no longer comprehend the its tremendous effect. All that Rolland postulated in it connotes, if read coolly and clearly, nothing but the most obvious truths. But these words were written in a time of mass insanity that can hardly be reconstructed today"³⁹.

And it was by his mediation, that French pacifist could enter in contact with their German counterparts exiled in Switzerland, which he deemed capable of embodying a different kind of Germany. Rolland's tenure and international acclaim helped him to enable the creation of a communication channel between Paris and Berlin. It was through him and his German fellow pacifists, Annette Kolb and René Schickelé, that in the winter of 1916-1917 a secret meeting took place between the *Auswärtiges Amt's* civil servant, count Harry Kessler, and Emile Haguenin, a French university professor in Berlin and by all accounts, one of Théophile Delcassé's, the French Foreign Minister, secret envoys to Switzerland. Haguenin's respected social and professional position, not to mention his connections in Berlin with the former French ambassador there, Jules Cambon, made him a suitable negotiator for both French and German governments, a true *homme d'influence* capable of carrying out delicate negotiation missions that were too sensitive to be delegated even to diplomats. Romain Rolland was the first to introduce the German pacifist Annette Kolb to Haguenin in the summer of 1916. Later that year, Kolb, in exchange for a permission from Berlin to settle in Switzerland, arranged a meeting between the *Auswärtiges Amt's* Harry Kessler and Haguenin. The following meeting prepared by Kolb and Schickelé took place in December 1916 amounted to nothing significant, neither Berlin nor Paris being willing or able to engage in more extensive peace

37. Quoted in Defrasne, *Le Pacifisme*, 87.

38. Landry Charrier, "Romain Rolland, Les relations franco-allemandes et la Suisse (1914-1919)", *Les cahiers Irice*, 8, 2 (2011): 92, accessed September 21, 2015, doi: 10.3917/lci.008.0091.

39. Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, 242.

talks, possibly Kessler and Haguenin being used by their own governments⁴⁰. For all its failure, it should be noted that this meeting was a significant breakthrough which would have not been possible without Rolland's active involvement.

However, Rolland's contribution to the pacifist activities in Switzerland was not limited only to facilitating high-profile encounters. He also used his reputation to offer patronage to three pacifist magazines that offered the opportunity for so many anti-war intellectuals firstly to express their disagreement to the war and secondly to communicate their ideas and principles on which a fairer and peaceful European order should be established at the end of the hostilities. In the words of researcher Landry Charrier: "he [Rolland] contributed to the formation of a microclimat favourable to a European idea."⁴¹

The first of these magazines was *Le Carmel*, founded in February 1916 by psychoanalyst Charles Baudouin, in the columns of which were published articles by pacifists like Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster who criticized Prussian militarism that took a hold on the German society, or like Alfred Hermann Fried who presented his ideas for achieving durable world peace. The second one was *Les tablettes*, set up by artists Jean Salives and Claude Le Maguet, where readers could find articles penned by Stefan Zweig. The last one and the most controversial of them all was *Demain*, the brainchild of Left radical Henri Guilbeaux. Aside from the intellectual quality of its material, *Demain* had a clear left-wing orientation that brought it more too often in conflict with French authorities⁴². As Zweig, perhaps a bit over exaggerating, explains in his memoirs:

It is to Guilbeaux's lasting merit that he established and conducted the only antiwar periodical of the First World War of intellectual substance, *Demain*, a document to be studied by all who wish really to understand the spiritual tendencies of that epoch. He supplied what we needed: a center of international, supranational discussion in the midst of the war. Rolland's backing fixed the importance of the paper and his moral leadership and his connections afforded Guilbeaux the best co-workers in Europe, America and India. Furthermore, Lenin, Trotsky, and Lunacharsky, revolutionaries then still in exile from Russia, trusted Guilbeaux's radicalism and contributed regularly to *Demain*⁴³.

Zweig was right to acknowledge Rolland's moral leadership, but when it came to concrete results regarding any influence on the France's successive war governments, the results were almost close to none. The same goes for the other French pacifists like Ruyssen who during the war was not able to weigh on the political

40. Landry Charrier, "A la recherche d'une paix de compromis : Kessler, Haguenin, et la diplomatie officieuse de l'hiver 1916-1917", *Histoire@Politique* 11 (2010), accessed September 19, 2015, doi : 10.3917/hp.011.0010.

41. Charrier, "Romain Rolland, Les relations franco-allemandes et la Suisse," 97.

42. Charrier "Romain Rolland, Les relations franco-allemandes et la Suisse," 98-101.

43. Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, 270-271.

decisions from Paris, bound to remain together with other fellow pacifists, a mere spectator to the ongoing slaughter that took place. After 1917, the year of the American entrance in the war when President Wilson presented among his country's war-aims that of establishing a global League of Nations, all that they could do was to embrace these ideas and become their advocates falling into a sort of almost "Wilsonian mysticism"⁴⁴. However, from that moment on, peace and the following establishment of a post-war order was not a matter of pacifist movements anymore. The French government became increasingly involved in the League of Nations initiative in order to capture the good-will of the American president. It is in this scope that in 1917, Prime Minister Afterwards, Alexandre Ribot set up an Inter-ministerial Committee on the Study of a League of Nations, presided by Léon Bourgeois and composed of twelve other members whose mission was to formulate the French government's official proposition for the foundation of a League of Nations⁴⁵.

Restrictions and Censorship. German Pacifists during World War One

WHEN IN 1914, Germany entered the war, all the Empire (except for Bavaria) was placed under the 1871 Prussian Law of State Siege. Bavaria was placed under its special Bavarian State of War Law. With all the authority over matters of public order and national security passed into military hands, the new bearers of power were the Deputy General Commanders in Berlin and Munich, who were able to intervene in areas such as press censorship⁴⁶. It should be noted that for the first months of the war, the German Peace Society was neither affected nor specifically targeted by the authorities and its journal, *Völker-Friede*, being published regularly with no particular restriction other than the usual one that the whole press experienced⁴⁷.

In these conditions, the Peace Society adopted a cautious tone and a low-profile, careful not to portrait itself as anti-patriotic to the German public and watchful not to put the blame of the war on their own government. Because of this, more radical peace seekers decided to found in the autumn of 1914 a new

44. Guieu, "« Pour la paix par la Société des Nations, »" 90-92.

45. Alexandre Niess, "Léon Bourgeois (1851-1925), juriste et ange de la Paix", *Parlement(s), Revue d'histoire politique*, 11(2009): 144, accessed September 28, 2015, url: www.cairn.info/revue-parlements1-2009-1-page-135.htm.

46. James Shand, "Doves Among Eagles: German Pacifists and Their Government During World War I", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.10/No.1 (January 1975): 96, accessed October 5, 2015, url : <http://www.jstor.org/stable/260139>.

47. David Welch, *Germany and Propaganda in World War I: Pacifism, Mobilization and Total War* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 144.

and more outspoken organization: *Bund Neues Vaterland* that counted among its members a heterogeneous crowd of pacifists composed of free-thinkers, diplomats, and liberal and socialist politicians. As early as April 1915, Germans pacifists still enjoyed a considerable room of manoeuvre, since four of the Peace Society members were allowed to travel to Hague to participate in a conference that was about to create the so-called Central Organization for a Durable Peace, aimed at coordinating the efforts of various peace movements across Europe⁴⁸.

However, things changed drastically by July the same year. The trigger was two publications written by Quidde, one a position paper in the name of the *Bund*, named *Shall We Annex?*, and a second one, a pamphlet printed in Munich, which bore the title *Real Guarantees for a Lasting Peace*, both of which were an obvious critique of the government's policy of annexation following its advancement on the Eastern front. Other than the natural confiscation of the relatively small number of copies of the two publications (the pamphlet was privately published in 32 000 copies), the consequences were severe since the *Bund* was eventually ordered to cease all activity and restrictions were put on the entire peace movement⁴⁹. When the conflict grew in intensity and the frontline stagnated, and the stakes became higher, the military authorities in Berlin and Munich orchestrated a campaign against the peace movement. A report issued by the Prussian Ministry of War and destined to the Deputy General Commander in Berlin concluded that as far as their intentions are concerned, although pacifist, they do not seek to purposely sabotage their government's efforts, being labelled as idealists, however "their mode of acting often borders on treason, since it is calculated to strengthen the enemy's will to resist at the cost of weakening our own determination to carry on the war."⁵⁰

In other words, in the eyes of the military authorities, the idealist aspirations of the pacifist propaganda may be counted as unintentional acts of treason since they undermine both the public opinion's and the soldiers' morale. The Ministries of War considered pacifism a sign of weakness and for that they felt obliged to pursue a more interventionist approach towards pacifists. However, precisely for the reason of not unsettling those who contributed the most to the war effort, the report recommended to the Deputy General Commanders a cautious approach in dealing with pacifists, namely to avoid any public prosecution that could draw attention to their cause and activities and preferably quietly forcing them to silence and inactivity⁵¹.

Quidde, quickly acknowledging the reasoning behind the authorities' new policies, tried to astutely argue that in choosing not to persecute the peace movement, the German government could convey to the Allies a message of self-confidence

48. Shand, "Doves Among Eagles", 97.

49. Welch, *Germany and Propaganda in World War I*, 148.

50. Shand, "Doves Among Eagles", 98.

51. Welch, *Germany and Propaganda in World War I*, 149.

and sureness. As the hostilities carried and a pressure was put on all segments of the society, by November 1915 the little favours the pacifists had been enjoying started to wane. The *Bund* and the Peace Society's publications were banned and the latter's headquarters in Stuttgart were closed. Living in Bavaria, Quidde experience particular harsh restrictions, his private correspondence being under surveillance and he was ordered to handle to the authorities the complete membership list of the Peace Society⁵².

Quidde was not alone in enduring this sort of harassment. Berlin-based physician and professor, Georg Friedrich Nicolai, after signing a peace Manifesto to the Europeans together with his faculty colleagues, was forcedly transferred to a garrison where he could act as a doctor. During his time there he completed a book called *The Biology of War*, written in clear anti-war tones⁵³. Impossible to be published in Germany, it was smuggled and eventually printed in Switzerland from where it was distributed with great success across Europe. Having learnt about his exploits he was ordered by his superiors to retract his opinion and to sign an official declaration on non-pursuing any pacifist goals. Refusing to comply and trying to avoid being sent to the first lines of the front, he managed to escape to Denmark where he remained until the end of the War. From there, Nicolai founded a pacifist magazine, *Das werdende Europa*, which stirred the enthusiasm of Romain Rolland to such extent that he accepted to be one of the magazine's external collaborators, a mutual and lasting admiration being developed between the two⁵⁴.

By the end of 1916 when Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg lifted all bans on the public discussion of Germany's war aims, but restrictions remained concerning the members of the pacifist movement. The situation somewhat relaxed only by the autumn of 1917 when in the general context (the Russian Revolutions and the United States' entrance in the war), Quidde and other prominent members of the Peace Society were narrowly allowed to travel to a congress in Switzerland, in a miscalculated and ill-fated move to improve Germany's position among international peace seekers. Finally, it will be during the government of Prince Max von Baden, in October 1918, all legal restrictions on the peace movement, private individuals included, were finally lifted, after for all the duration of the war the military authorities "failed to differentiate between legitimate pacifist concern, revolutionary agitation - or outright defeatism"⁵⁵. In assessing the German peace movement's accomplishments during the Great War, historian Julian Shand rightfully points out that: "[it] was definitely a fringe phenomenon in terms of numerical support, popular rapport, public effect, or political influence."⁵⁶

52. Welch, *Germany and Propaganda in World War I*, 151.

53. Shand, "Doves Among Eagles", 103.

54. Charrier, "Romain Rolland, Les relations franco-allemandes et la Suisse," 105-106.

55. Welch, *Germany and Propaganda in World War I*, 155.

56. Shand, "Doves Among Eagles", 105.

Conclusions

AS SEEN, in the pre-war societies of the Third French Republic and Imperial Germany pacifism was perceived as a marginal and irrelevant manifestation of idealistic pursuits and unattainable goals. Both of these countries were experiencing a period of nationalistic *ethos* that seemed to compass every aspect of the social-political life, fostered mutual animosity, and rendered inevitable a future conflict, although, in France at least, it was counterbalanced by a vigorous tradition of republican values⁵⁷.

Inevitably pacifism was seen as something foreign and treated with suspicion and failed in accomplishing its goals. It is this context that explains first and foremost the inability of the pacifist official and unofficial leaders like Théodore Ruysen, Romain Rolland, or Alfred H. Fried and Ludwig Quidde to capture the mind and soul of their Nations with the message of peace that they were promoting. Secondly, there was a division on how this message of peace should be propagated. There were the ones like Fried that believed that peace was ultimately a scientific process manifested as an affair of technocratic elite, achieved by professionals and experts in the fields of international relations and world-economy. Quidde on the other hand was convinced that pacifism should be based on an ethical basis and throughout his career he emphasized the importance of propagating pacifism's message to the masses, since they were the first ones concerned. Thirdly, pacifists were kept out of governmental policymaking circles incapable of exerting any real influence both before and during the Great War.

When the war broke out, governments in Berlin and Paris applied severe restrictions on their respective pacifist movements and their activities were considerably limited. The pressure of combined censorship and harassment forced many of them to seek the path of exile, like it was the case for Romain Rolland, Alfred Fried, Georg Friedrich Nicolai and many others. They managed to continue their ongoing advocacy, and at times even acted as liaisons between their governments, but once again their influence regarding the course of the war was inexistent.

After America's entrance in the war and with President Wilson's support for a League of Nations, they were somewhat outmanoeuvred by politicians who wanted to capitalize on American good-will, and their contributions were hardly noticed when it came to real decisions⁵⁸.

Moreover, new obstacles seemed to arise between the French and German peace movements. If before the war the question of Alsace-Lorraine was troubling their cooperation, after the war it would be the question of The Versailles Treaty

57. Hagen Schulze, *Staat und Nation in der europäischen Geschichte* (Munich: Beck, 1995), 245.

58. See Jean-Michel Guieu, "Les Allemands et la Société des Nations (1914-1926)", *Les cahiers Irice* Vol.8, No.2 (2011) : 61-80, accessed October 10, 2015, doi : 10.3406/mat.1993.404083.

and Germany's War Guilt that would render cooperation difficult, especially in the context of the interwar years when on the background of escalating extremism⁵⁹, the mild-mannered old way of pacifism (*pacifisme style ancien*) was being replaced by a more assertive new style pacifism⁶⁰ (*pacifisme style nouveau*), where the likes of Ruysen, Quidde and others of their generation had a difficult place to find.

However, without a doubt, as historian Sophie Lorrain points out, their greatest achievement was that of establishing the ground of the future reconciliation of France and Germany, an event that would take place after almost a half-century from the end of the First World War with the signing of the Elysée Treaty of 1963⁶¹, and also on the subsequent ideas of European unity⁶². Unfortunately, until then, during the Great War, pacifists remained prophets preaching in the desert.

59. See Gilbert Merlio, "Le pacifisme en Allemagne et en France entre les deux guerres mondiales", *Les cahiers Irice*, .8, 2 (2011) : 39-59, accessed October 10, 2015, doi : 10.3917/lci.008.0039.

60. Norman Ingram, "Pacifisme ancien style, ou le pacifisme de l'Association Paix par le Droit", *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps* Vol. 30, No. 1 (1993) : 4, accessed October 10, 2015, 10.3406/mat.1993.404083.

61. Sophie Lorrain, *Des pacifistes*, 244.

62. See Marta Petricoli, Donnatella Cherubini, Alessandra Anteghini (eds.), *Les Etats-Unis d'Europe, un projet pacifiste* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003).

A HIGHLY CONTESTED FUTURE FRENCH AND GERMAN GOVERNMENTAL PLANS FOR ALSACE-LORRAINE IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR



JOSEPH SCHMAUCH

Abstract

Following the military events of the summer of 1914, the question of Alsace-Lorraine becomes a main issue for the French government. In February 1915, a “Committee of Alsace-Lorraine” is created to think about the policies to be applied in case of a repossession of this region. This institution aims to solve the immediate problems raised by the French occupation of areas in Alsace, so as to organise the future of a region supposed to become French again soon. During the same period, the German government makes its own plans about the future of the Reichsland. The first projects aim to share Alsace-Lorraine between Prussia and Bavaria with the purpose of assimilating and germanising the region. However, after the ministerial crisis and the “peace resolution” voted by the Reichstag in 1917, proposals for a political autonomy of the region are also made. One century after the breakout of World War I, it appears interesting to replace these French-German reflections in a European perspective in order to appreciate their impact on the history of the Rhine region during the twentieth century

Keywords

World War I, population, Alsace-Lorraine, gouvernement

Contribution

THOUGH THEY had been French since the 17th century, the departments of Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin and the northern part of Lorraine were annexed to the German Empire by the Treaty of Frankfurt, which ended the French-German war of 1870-1871. This annexation of territories led to a deep fracture between republican France and imperial Germany. In the decades that separate the French humiliation of 1871 from the First World War, this situation is regarded as painful. In 1914, except in nationalists' circles, these mental representations are nevertheless not strong enough any longer to make people wish for revenge; fifty years of peace have largely dulled the resentment against Germany¹.

At the same time, in Alsace as well as in Lorraine, except for a few politicians, the vast majority of the population do accept the *faits accomplis*, preferring the preservation of peace to an armed conflict about the future of the region. The annexation to the German Empire resulted in industrial prosperity, integration into a dynamic economic area and social progress. In the political field, the protest movement from the first decades has turned into a demand for autonomy, partially satisfied by the German government (a constitution and a regional parliament called *Landtag* were granted in 1911, but the local authorities are still appointed by Germany)². Nevertheless, the majority of people still remain aware of a common heritage with France, keeping in mind the democratic benefits of the French Revolution and the epic dimensions of Napoleonic Wars. Tensions between Alsatian and German people even appear as of 1913, due to the attitude of the Prussian soldiers garrisoned in Alsace (the Saverne affair).

Alsace-Lorraine plays no role in the diplomatic crisis of the summer of 1914. But as First World War breaks out, the question of Alsace-Lorraine takes another turn. Quoting Marc Bloch, a historian: "*During the first days of battle in 1914, the image of Alsace-Lorraine suddenly rose up from the discrete shadow where, a few days before, it was still hidden.*"³ The eyes of the governments in Paris and Berlin suddenly turn to look at Strasbourg. The French government is now preparing a war that will allow the reintegration of the provinces that were lost in 1871. Whereas in Berlin ministers are looking for a political solution that will enable these provinces to remain German permanently. My research topic is about a region involved in an international conflict, but also characterized by a double culture. Therefore I will choose a comparative approach. Furthermore, it is inter-

1. Cf. Jean-Noël and Francis Grandhomme, *Les Alsaciens-Lorrains dans la Grande Guerre* (Strasbourg: La Nuée Bleue, 2013), 509 p. François Roth, *Alsace-Lorraine. Histoire d'un « Pays perdu » de 1870 à nos jours* (Nancy: Éd. Place Stanislas, 2010), 199 p.
2. Jean-Marie Mayeur, *Autonomie et politique en Alsace. La constitution de 1911* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1970), 188.
3. Marc Bloch, *L'étrange défaite* (éd. Franc-Tireur, 1946), 155.

esting to consider this situation with the political and administrative projects conceived in order to transfer lands during First World War. This is a first: in 1860, when the French Empire got Savoy and the County of Nizza, the government just substituted French laws to the Sardinian ones, without any particular dispositions. The Alsatian-Lorraine case also has to be compared to other litigated territories that are changing sovereignty in 1918 (Trentino, Schleswig or Transylvania). As an example: the French government appointed a Committee to define the future of Transylvania with, among other members, Emmanuel de Martonne, a geographer⁴.

While the French government is making projects for Alsace-Lorraine, what plans are been conceived on the other side of the front line? To what extent are the orientations of the French government directly influenced by the German ones? And on which presuppositions about the local situation are these different plans built?

1. French authorities preparing reintegration: the government and the administration of Alsace-Lorraine (1914-1919)

a. Alsace-Lorraine, a French war aim

FORTY-FIVE YEARS after the defeat of Sedan, the French government is preparing a war aiming at reconquering the provinces lost by Napoleon III. From a juridical point of view, since the German invasion of Belgium, the government considers the Treaty of Frankfurt as broken. This new war shall be short and enable the return of Alsace-Lorraine into the bosom of the Republic. During the whole conflict, French authorities have got three priorities in order to achieve this goal: preparing the future of a French Alsace-Lorraine (political and administrative issues); making people in Alsace-Lorraine love France (by propaganda, by welcoming refugees and war prisoners); giving Alsace-Lorraine a well-organized public administration. On the 20th of September 1914, the French Council of Ministers unanimously declares that “*The Government of the Republic commits itself not to consider the war ended until the day when the entire national territory, even including Alsace-Lorraine, is evacuated by the enemy*”⁵. So it is made clear why the government is dealing so early with Alsace-Lorraine issues.

In the first weeks of conflict, the French government becomes concretely concerned with Alsace-Lorraine, since the offensive of summer 1914 has allowed the French armies to occupy the southern part of Alsace. This military occupation

4. François Bocholier, “Les projets de réforme du statut de la Transylvanie dans le contexte des relations internationales en Europe centrale et orientale (1890-1920)”, in *Recueil d'articles à paraître aux éditions L'Harmattan* (2005, 2004), 14 p.
5. Raymond Poincaré, *Au service de la France. Neuf années de souvenirs, L'invasion* (1914), 194.

shall be durable and the Alsatian territories under French control immediately appear as a small size laboratory of French Alsace-Lorraine, where the government will engage its credibility. General Joffre doesn't hesitate to make very political speeches, e.g. when, in Thann, a small city located in the Vosges Mountains, he declares: "*France offers you the liberties it has always represented, but it will also respect your own liberties, the Alsatian liberties, your traditions, your convictions, as well as your way of life*".⁶ As the perspective of victory is approaching for the allies, these results arouse an always growing interest.

Outside the valleys of Vosges Mountains, the French public administration is already dealing with Alsatian civilians: from the beginning of the war onwards, many evacuated people, refugees and war prisoners are flooding toward the inner regions of France⁷. This rush of people leads the government to define a position about the question of Alsatian-Lorrainer's nationality, a very ambiguous one. From a juridical point of view, France considers Alsatians as former French citizens reluctantly maintained in the German nationality: since the Treaty of Frankfurt is practically repealed, they have to be treated as French citizens. In reality, the situation is much more delicate for them, and the insult of "Boche" is often used against Alsatians⁸. Alsatian-Lorrainers are in fact considered as suspects by both belligerent nations, yet everybody denies such a situation⁹.

b. French specific committees appointed to build up the future of Alsace-Lorraine

THE FIRST committee whose aim is to prepare the reintegration of Alsace-Lorraine is created by the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs on February the 10th, 1915. It is called "Conférence d'Alsace-Lorraine" (Committee for Alsace-Lorraine) and its initiator is the President of the Council of Ministers René Viviani. This commission has the mission to "*produce documents, study solutions to prepare the way in order to administrate Alsace-Lorraine when it is French again*"¹⁰. Presided by Louis Barthou, Member of Parliament, the "Conférence d'Alsace-Lorraine" includes twenty members in 1915: five members of Parliament, eight high-ranking civil servants, two rep-

6. Archives of the Department of Haut-Rhin (ADHR), 16 AL 2/1 à 12. Great Headquarter of the Armies of East, administration of French territories.

7. See Patricia Guyard, « Contrôle, internement civil et refuge pendant la guerre 1914-1918 dans le Doubs, sources et perspectives de recherches », *Mémoires de la Société d'émulation du Doubs*, no. 42, Vesoul, SN IMB (2000), p. 103-143.

8. Archives of the Department of Belfort (ADTB), 11 fi 11.24. Poster entitled: « *Les Alsaciens-Lorrains sont nos frères* ».

9. Jean-Noël Grandhomme, « La préfecture du Jura et l'accueil des réfugiés alsaciens-lorrains à Dole pendant la Première Guerre mondiale », in Maurice Vaisse, *Les Préfets, leur rôle, leur action dans le domaine de la Défense (de 1800 à nos jours)* (Bruxelles: Bruylant, 2001), 225-247.

10. French National Library (BnF), *Minutes of the Committee for Alsace-Lorraine*, 1st session, 10 février 1915.

representatives of the military Great Headquarter and five representatives of Alsace-Lorraine. The committee includes many lawyers (e.g. Paul-Albert Helmer or Frédéric Eccard¹¹). Every political orientation is represented, as an image of the national union government (*gouvernement d'Union Sacrée*). Among the representatives of Alsace-Lorraine, one can find catholic or socialist Members of the German Parliament (*Reichstag*), local artists, as well as manufacturers from Mulhouse or from northern Lorraine. The most famous Alsatian representatives of this committee are probably Emile Wetterlé, a member of the *Reichstag*, who left Colmar a few days before the war outbreak¹² or Daniel Blumenthal, a former mayor of Colmar, dismissed from his duties by the German authorities¹³. Other well-known or political figures are already present in Paris in August 1914: it is the case of manufacturer Daniel Mieg¹⁴ or of socialist leader Georges Weill (he was a direct witness of the murder of Jean Jaurès¹⁵). All these Alsations share Francophile convictions and have decided to serve the French Republic, in spite of their political and social integration to the German Empire. In the French capital, they meet the "Alsations of Paris" (people or descendants of people who left Alsace to remain French in 1871). These influential people are all involved in patriotic associations like the General Association of Alsace and Lorraine (*Association générale d'Alsace-Lorraine*), led by Charles Risler, or the left-minded Republican league of Alsace-Lorraine (*Ligue républicaine d'Alsace-Lorraine*), led by Charles Andler. These few men shall use all their influence to weigh on the governmental decisions about Alsace-Lorraine.

These personalities are also members of private committees, discussing the same topics as the official "*Conférence d'Alsace-Lorraine*" and linked to it. It is the case of the Committee for economic and administrative studies on Alsace-Lorraine (*Comité d'études économiques et administratives*), created in 1916 by Albert Kahn and Daniel Mieg, or the Lorrainer's group (*Groupe lorrain*), founded by ambassador Maurice Bompard and manufacturer François de Wendel, who felt angry with Alsations occupying all the posts in official organisations¹⁶!

The meetings of the Committee for Alsace-Lorraine are quite rare till 1917, the year when everything changes for Alsace-Lorraine. At that moment, the civil government is taking ascendancy on the military Great Headquarter, and is put-

11. Frédéric Eccard, *Le livre de ma vie (1867-1951)* (Neuchâtel, V. Attinger / Paris, Oberlin, 1951), 352 p.
12. Christian Baechler, « L'abbé Wetterlé, un prêtre patriote et libéral (1861-1931) », *Archives de l'Église d'Alsace*, no. 45 (1986) : 243-286.
13. Private archives of the Blumenthal family, autobiographic narration about the departure of Daniel Blumenthal from Colmar.
14. Émile Dollfus, « Daniel Mieg (1854-1932) », *Bulletin de la Société industrielle de Mulhouse*, t. IC, 4 (avril 1933): 217-226.
15. *Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français*, art. Georges Weill.
16. French National Archives (AN), AJ³⁰ 109. Lorrainer's Group: list of members. AN, archives of the De Wendel family (190 AQ). Archives of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, archives of Ambassador Maurice Bompard (417 PA-AP).

ting an end to the political and moral crisis (as an example, the mutinies occurred during the spring of that year). The diplomatic context is in fact becoming more open: proposals of peace are made by the young Austrian Emperor Charles II, diplomats have secret conversations in Switzerland and French newspapers mention the possibility of peace¹⁷. Unofficial contacts are also made with representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (Prince Sixte of Bourbon-Parme) and even of the German Empire (meeting between Minister Aristide Briand and Baron of Lancken). These contacts aim at a negotiated peace that will satisfy the French minimal war purposes: return of Alsace-Lorraine to France, with compensations for the German colonial Empire; but it is also question of a neutral Alsace-Lorraine, or a status of autonomy for this region within the frame of the German Empire. In addition, the French Government is well informed of the debates held by the *Reichstag*, about the granting of autonomy to Alsace-Lorraine. It is now high time for France to form its own propositions about the future of Alsace-Lorraine. Last but not least, after the Russian revolution and the failure of the Spring military offensives, war purposes have to be redefined and reduced¹⁸. In consequence, the return of Alsace-Lorraine appears as a minimal war purpose, for which all political forces, even the socialist party, stand up. For the socialists, such a territorial cession should nevertheless take into consideration the national desire of the local population. The renewed interest for Alsace-Lorraine consequently leads to reinforcing the French propaganda about the reconquest of the lost provinces. That's why a specific office for propaganda (*Bureau d'études d'Alsace-Lorraine*) is created, placed under the authority of the General Office For Propaganda (*Commissariat général à la propagande*) led by Antony Klobukowsky, a friend of Clemenceau's¹⁹.

c. A French programme of government in Alsace-Lorraine

From the beginning of the war, proposals are made about the future administration of Alsace-Lorraine. In a *Memorandum about the civil organisation of the department of Haut-Rhin* (*Mémoire concernant l'organisation civile du département du Haut-Rhin*²⁰), established on the 15th of August 1914, lawyer Paul-Albert Helmer

17. François Roth, *Raymond Poincaré*, Fayard, 2001, p. 342. See Georges-Henri Soutou, *La Grande illusion. Quand la France perdait la paix. 1914-1920* (Tallandier, 2015), 377 p.

18. See Pierre Renouvin, « Les buts de guerre du gouvernement français (1914-1918) », *Revue historique*, 235 (1966): 1-38. Jacques Bariéty, notice on André Scherer et Jacques Grunewald, *L'Allemagne et les problèmes de la paix pendant la Première Guerre Mondiale*, t. 2 (1^{er} février-7 novembre 1917) (PUF, 1996), *Revue historique* (avr.-juin 1968): 460.

19. Joseph Schmauch « Au pays de la Marseillaise. French propaganda and the question of Alsace-Lorraine during First World War », conference given during the international conference *War and Propaganda in the Twentieth Century*, University of Lisbon, Department of human and social sciences, 11-12 novembre 2013.

20. ADHR, 2 J 208. *Memorandum about the civil organisation of the department of Haut-Rhin*, August 15th 1914.

proposes to restore the French organisation, in complete opposition with the German federal system. Paul-Albert Helmer favours a centralised organisation, with three prefects of departments directly connected to the government in Paris. Whereas a second report by Anselme Laugel proposes to maintain a regional administration in Strasbourg, with authority on the three departments of Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin and Moselle. This organisation in great regions is likely to be extended, in the future, to the whole France. In what legislation is concerned, the committee for Alsace-Lorraine proposes to maintain temporary local laws and institutions, which could not be immediately substituted by the French counterparts.

Throughout the debates of the Committee²¹, three orientations about the organization of Alsace-Lorraine can be identified. A first tendency fights for a restoration of Alsace-Lorraine as it was in 1870. A second one is favourable to maintaining a provisional status in order to make the transition easier and progressive (most civil-servants share this point of view). And finally, there are the supporters of a new organization in Alsace-Lorraine, which will take into consideration the evolutions that have occurred during German rule. This same cleavage can be observed in the debates dealing with civil legislation. Some people support the immediate introduction of all French civil laws in Alsace-Lorraine after the victory, as a symbol of national unity. The second group favours the provisional maintaining of local laws. The third group advocates for the application to France of some German laws, operative in Alsace-Lorraine, and considered more progressive than their French counterparts (e.g. the Bismarckian Welfare system).

The committee for Alsace-Lorraine also deals with economic and social issues. French businessmen are well aware of the great trouble that the competition of Alsatian-Lorrain factories may cause on the French inner market (particularly in the fields of steel and textile industries). That's why the section for economic issues of the Committee favours the provisional maintaining of free exchanges between Alsace-Lorraine and Germany after war. Such a custom system shall allow the export of Alsatian-Lorrain products beyond the Rhine²². The Committee also foresees the regulation of the Rhine upstream from Strasbourg, so that the river will be navigable all the way to Basel (the construction of the Great Canal of Alsace finds its origin in these debates)²³.

Debates about the educational and linguistic issues lead to sharp arguments between the Alsatian representatives themselves. The point of division is about whether or not to maintain the Napoleonic Concordat, which continues to define the relationships between the Church and the State. During the fifty years of annex-

21. BnF, *Minutes of the Committee for Alsace-Lorraine* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1917-1919), 2 bands.

22. *Ibidem*, 20th session, July 19th 1915. Report on trade and customs regime.

23. AN, AJ³⁰ 99. Report about Rhine and canals in Alsace-Lorraine, by Daniel Mieg, May 1918.

ation to Germany, a real gap appeared in matters of religion between France and Alsace-Lorraine. France had carried on a politic of secularization of the State and schools, whereas the annexed provinces remain a religious stronghold²⁴. In educative issues, the committee for Alsace-Lorraine votes a text aiming at the introduction of French laws on free, compulsory and secularized primary education. The educative system shall also promote the teaching of French language at school. Sharp oppositions nevertheless occur about the method of teaching to be introduced in Alsace-Lorraine. The Committee favours the “direct method”, that is to say teaching exclusively in French, in order to make the child think in French, without any translations into his first language (Alsatian, a Germanic dialect). Alternative proposals are also expressed. In an article published in the newspaper “*L’Alsace républicaine*”, Ferdinand Brunot, Ludovic Meister and Charles Schweitzer advocate a French-German bilingual regime in Alsatian schools²⁵.

What conclusions can be drawn about these French proposals for the future Alsace-Lorraine? One shall acknowledge that, in 1914, the French public authorities have an insufficient knowledge of the real political situation in Alsace. These wrong perceptions are to be put on the account of the one-sided information source the government has at its disposal. The “Alsations of Paris” and the French-minded Alsations involved in the Committee display an intense activity to describe their region in the better light. Listening to them, all the Alsations are mourning, waiting to become French again! In a way, they are often more nationalist than French nationalists themselves. The government should rather have read more carefully the reports made by the military Intelligence services, as they were more cautious in their political analyses about Alsace-Lorraine. Last but not least, French projects shall be understood with the filter of French political culture: the culture of a well united Republic, composed of departments without any local autonomy. This culture also includes some part of anticlericalism. This feeling is likely to enter in contradiction with the Alsatian political wish for autonomy (built up in the context of the Wilhelminian Empire and strongly defended by a powerful catholic clergy).

Nevertheless, these projects conceived in Paris for Alsace-Lorraine must not be caricatured. Because of its composition and the necessity of national union

24. BnF, *Minutes of the Committee for Alsace-Lorraine*. Report on the religious questions by François de Wendel. « *The committee, which desires to grant religious peace in Alsace-Lorraine, thinks it will be good to introduce as soon as possible the Separation of Churches and State law. It nevertheless thinks that it is necessary to introduce some care and attention. It will be necessary to preserve the existent benefits for the actual clergy and to find a solution to make that the cultural associations will be approved by the Catholic Church. Conversations with Rome will be necessary in this purpose.* »

25. ADHR, 27 J 9. *The linguistic question in Alsace-Lorraine*, by Ferdinand Brunot, Ludovic Meister and Charles Schweitzer, in *L’Alsace républicaine*, published by the *Republican league of Alsace and Lorraine*.

in its ranks, the Committee for Alsace-Lorraine is more often than not looking for solutions of compromise. When planning the integration of provinces into the French nation, it always considers the possibility of transitions and of some provisional maintaining of local laws. The notion of “local right”, still effective in Alsace-Lorraine, finds its roots in the reflections of the lawyers of the Committee for Alsace-Lorraine. The context of war and the awareness of the task importance sometimes also lead to innovations: the committee shows some interest for the German Welfare system, advocates great projects for economic development, considers the possibility of bilingualism in the educative system...

2. Autonomy, splitting or integration into Prussia: the German solutions for Alsace-Lorraine after war

a. Divide to rule more easily: the first plans of partition

THE GERMAN government, as well as the French one, cared about the future of Alsace-Lorraine early. In the first months of war, it showed concern for the political situation in the annexed provinces. The warm welcoming of French troops in Mulhouse, in August 1914, but also the flight to Paris of Alsatian notables, constitute the evident proof that fifty years of German presence in Alsace did not enable the whole assimilation of the annexed departments. The situation leads to question the constitutional organisation of the *Reichsland* (“Empire’s land”), in which a regional parliament was created in 1911. How did the local organisation interfere with the Alsatian regional character and its propensity to autonomy²⁶? Seen from Berlin, these specificities are ultimately considered a sign of French-minded nostalgia (reality is much more complex).

From the autumn of 1914 on, the government thinks about the opportunity of a constitutional reformation. Is it appropriate to maintain Alsace-Lorraine as it is, or is it necessary to divide it between German States, in order to reinforce assimilation? These reflections remind us of the debates that preceded the granting of the constitution in 1911, which was a compromise between the supporters of an autonomous Alsace-Lorraine, and those who preferred a strong policy of Germanization²⁷. Four options can be considered for Alsace-Lorraine: political *status quo*, incorporation into the Kingdom of Prussia, division between more German States, the granting of autonomy (changing Alsace-Lorraine into a

26. Secret archives of the Foundation for Prussian Culture (GAPK), 1 HA Rep. 89 Nr. 3626. Memory and documents about the behaviour of the populations in Alsace and Lorraine in the war (*Denkschrift und Dokumente über das Verhalten der Elsass-lothringischen Bevölkerung während des Krieges*), Autumn 1915, 78+36 p.

27. Jean-Marie Mayeur, *Autonomie et politique en Alsace. La constitution de 1911* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1970), 212 p.

Bundesstaat, a German federated State). From a political standpoint, everybody in Germany agrees to consider this problem as a strictly internal issue: Alsace-Lorraine is and shall remain part of the German Empire. There are no divergences about the national belonging of Alsace-Lorraine, but only about the status to be given to Alsace-Lorraine within the German Empire²⁸.

The first plans in order to divide Alsace-Lorraine come into discussion on the occasion of two councils of ministers of the Prussian Kingdom (*Staatsministerium*), in April and September of 1915²⁹. These first plans, conceived in Berlin, reserve the lion's share to Prussia: Alsace and Lorraine shall become Prussian territories, with the exception of the northern part of Alsace that is to be united to the Bavarian Palatinate. In reaction, the government in Munich develops its own argumentation in order to obtain a more equitable partition of Alsace: if Alsace had a Bavarian catholic sovereign, and if it was united to a State of Southern Germany, Alsatians would probably show less reluctance to be German³⁰.

B. Time for autonomy?

AFTER THE ministerial crisis of 1917 (the firing of the chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg by the Emperor, influenced by the military Great Headquarter), the *Reichstag* tries to regain the initiative on interior reforms³¹. The absence of any political solution for Alsace-Lorraine also appears as an obstacle to a negotiated peace with France. When voting its "peace resolution", the *Reichstag* considers Alsace-Lorraine as a central issue for Germany again. A majority, associating social-democrats and Catholics of the *Zentrum* (the German centre party), led by MP Mathias Erzberger, is emerging in favour of an autonomous Alsace-Lorraine. The Catholics of the *Zentrum*-Party are almost dreaming of a member of the Bavarian House of Wittelsbach on the throne of Alsace-Lorraine³². But the Kingdom of Wurtemberg has already got its own candidate in the person of Wilhelm von Urach. A figure with a singular destiny: the legitimate heir of the Principality of Monaco, a candidate to the throne of Alsace-Lorraine, the Duke of Urach is crowned King of Lithuania, bearing the name of Mindaugas II, but he is finally forced to give up his crown and all his ambitions after the armistice of 1918³³. Last but not least, the

28. Zevas (Alexandre), *La question d'Alsace-Lorraine et le socialisme* (1918), 69-71.

29. GAPK, 1 HA Rep. 90 Annex E 3. Session of the Council of Ministers of Prussia, April 10th 1915; the debates are mentioned in Georg Wolfram, *Das Reichsland Elsass-Lothringen (1871-1918)* (Berlin, 1934-1938), 89-90.

30. *Ibidem*. "The whole Alsace, including Strasbourg, could be ruled, under Bavarian authority, by a well centralised and efficient administration".

31. Christian Baechler, *Guillaume II* (Paris: Fayard, 2003), 533 p.

32. State Archives of Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart (LABW), E 40 16 Bü 670. Report of the ambassador of Wurtemberg in Munich, October 20th 1917. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, archives of the Papal Nuncio in Munich. Monaco 343. Report of the Nuncio Eugenio Pacelli entitled: "*Alsace-Lorraine raised up as an autonome federated State*", November 2nd 1917.

33. LABW, GU 117 Nr. 768. Memorandum by Wilhelm, Duke of Urach, 5th June 1917.

Austro-Hungarian Monarchy has got its own plans and a Hapsburg candidate to sit on the throne in Strasbourg!

In autumn 1917, Count Hertling, recently appointed as chancellor, orders a survey about the future of Alsace-Lorraine addressed to his ministers, to the military headquarters and to the civil administration in Strasbourg³⁴. All these personalities have to answer the question: 'what organisation do you recommend for the future in Alsace-Lorraine?' The solution of autonomy is favoured by the Members of the Reichstag and by some Alsatian politicians (like the President of the local parliament Eugen Ricklin, who makes several trips to Berlin and Munich to meet Prussian and Bavarian officials). But Lorrainers don't share this point of view: their elites would prefer an annexation to Prussia, which would be more likely to satisfy their ambitions in the field of industrial development³⁵. In Germany, outside the *Reichstag's* hemicycle, you can find two kinds of supporters for autonomy in Alsace-Lorraine. The first ones are civil servants, well informed about the political situation in Alsace (e.g. the Count of Wedel). The second ones are diplomats, sensitive to the image given by Germany to the world, whose leader is Richard von Kühlmann, Minister of Foreign Affairs. They think that giving autonomy to Alsace-Lorraine will answer the question and ease international talks, in order to conclude peace with the "Entente" countries. A dismemberment of Alsace-Lorraine between German sovereigns would, on the contrary, lead to very unfriendly sentiments against Germany, particularly in the United States, whose president strongly defends the right of peoples to self-determination.

C. A strong opposition to any reform

BUT THERE is no unanimity about this perspective of an autonomous Alsace-Lorraine. There is rather a strong opposition against any constitutional evolution in the ranks of the military Great Headquarter (*Oberheeresleitung*), represented by Feldmarshall von Hindenburg and General Ludendorff. These officers bring up again old arguments, which were used during the Franco-German war of 1870-1871: Alsace-Lorraine shall be the defensive wall of the German Empire. It is essential not to weaken this bulwark³⁶. It would be irresponsible to allow Alsace-Lorraine to threaten Germany's security from the inside. Only two solutions shall be acceptable for the future of the region: the integration into the Kingdom of Prussia or its division between German federated States. The first solution has got the preference of the governmental circles in Berlin. These quarrels lead to a real propa-

34. German Federal Archives, Department « German Empire » (BArch). Reports about the future of Alsace-Lorraine sent to chancellor Hertling, December 1917.

35. François Roth, *La Lorraine annexée (1870-1918)*, Nancy, Université de Nancy-II, 1976, 765 p. (doctoral thesis, university Nancy-II, 1973), 618-619.

36. BArch, R 43/156. Report sent by Marshall von Hindenburg to the Chancellor, 27th December 1917.

ganda campaign against autonomy, led by the Old-German and academic circles in Alsace-Lorraine. A campaign carried out with many leaflets and memorandums published in order to inform the decision makers. Academics, members of patriotic associations, and defenders of Pan-Germanism multiply the requests for audiences with the Emperor, the ministers and also the Courts of the federated States³⁷. It is interesting to note that the petitioners not only defend the political subordination of Alsace to Prussia, but also a strong linguistic policy against the presence of the French language in the annexed provinces³⁸.

But the main obstacle to the granting of autonomy comes from the federated States themselves. Since 1914, the Bavarian government has defended an equitable sharing of the *Reichsland* and has shown concern about a solution from which would benefit Prussia exclusively. However, on the other hand, other States of Southern Germany are afraid by any Bavarian expansion. During the first winter of war, the minister-president of the little Kingdom of Wurtemberg (whose capital is Stuttgart), von Weiszäcker, expressed a dissonant opinion toward the plans discussed between the governments of Berlin and Munich³⁹. Last but not least, the government of the Great Duchy of Baden shows some internal divisions. The protestant entourage of Great-Duke Friedrich declines any territorial increase of their State (they are afraid by the perspective of having to assimilate reluctant and catholic Alsatians), whereas catholic circles in Baden wish to annex some territories in South-Alsace⁴⁰. The Bavarian government capitalizes on this agitated context to negotiate with the government of Saxony in Dresden, in order to find an ally to make their ambitions in Alsace come true. The Kingdom of Saxony will encourage Bavarian ambitions in Alsace; in return, Bavaria will support Saxony's territorial claims in Poland or Lithuania⁴¹. The strong opposition of Stuttgart's government to all these plans will be decisive. In a letter personally addressed to the *Kaiser* in 1918, King Wilhelm of Wurtemberg reiterates his opposition to any territorial increase of Bavaria and shows concerns about the risks involved by such internal divisions in Germany while waging war⁴². Entering the last year of war, Germany is disabled by its federal organisation to politically solve the prob-

37. LABW Karlsruhe, 60 No. 495. Memorandum sent by the « Association of conservative Protestants » (*Konservative Reformvereinigung*) in Strasbourg sent to Frederic 2nd of Baden, 23th August 1917.

38. *Ibidem*.

39. Archives of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PAAA), R 2976. Report sent by the Prussian ambassador in Stuttgart, 18th November 1915.

40. PAAA, R 2977. Report of the Prussian ambassador in Karlsruhe [capital of Baden], 5th January 1917.

41. Secret Archives of the Bavarian Court, König Ludwig III. 69. Orientations for the diplomatic conversations with Dresde [1916].

42. LABW Stuttgart, E 74 Bü 463. Letter sent by King of Wurtemberg to Empereor Wilhelm 2nd, Schloss Friedrichshafen, 16th August 1918.

lem of Alsace-Lorraine, even if the German parliamentary elites aspire to peace and are ready to make concessions about the future of the *Reichsland*. Until the weeks preceding the conclusion of an armistice, a combination of factors impedes any governmental action in Alsace-Lorraine. These factors are: first, the strong combined opposition of the military headquarters, the Prussian ministers and the Pan-Germanists' lobby and, above all, the strong divisions amongst German federated States.

Appointed as chancellor on the 2nd of October 1918 in order to reform the Empire, and facing the perspective of a military defeat, Prince Max of Baden attempts an ultimate manoeuvre to obtain an overturn of the public opinion in Alsace-Lorraine and abroad. On the 5th of October he announces the granting of autonomy to Alsace-Lorraine, finally considered as a federated State with its own government. But it is now too late: the fortunes of war and the peace negotiations with the "Entente" countries have put an end to all reflections about a German Alsace-Lorraine⁴³.

Conclusions

ON BOTH sides of the front-line, the future of Alsace-Lorraine has been an essential issue and many projects have been built up for the after-war period. These projects concerned the constitutional organisation of the region, as well as the policies to be carried out. It seems interesting to have an overlook of what was made with all this material during the year which followed the conclusion of peace.

A first observation can be made: the French administration, which has its offices in Strasbourg after the armistice, carries out policies that are far away from the cautious advice of the Committee for Alsace-Lorraine. The Committee recommended a slow assimilation of the provinces, with legal and administrative transitions. In the weeks that follow the conclusion of the armistice, the French government makes the choice of an immediate assimilation, firing most German civil servants and looking for the disappearance of each trace of the German system. Very quickly, however, during the spring of 1919, the government is forced to make concessions. Aware that a transitory system is necessary, the French President of Council Clemenceau accepts to create a regional administration (*Commissariat général de la République française à Strasbourg*), which quite reminds us of the German Statthalter. A consultative council (*conseil consultatif*), which reminds us of the old regional parliament (*Landtag*) is created at the same time.

43. BArch. Abt. DR, R 43/156. Report sent by the Statthalter Schwander to the Chancellor, 26th October 1918.

Furthermore, one can observe that the German projects as well as the French ones have been built up without any advice of really representative personalities. On the French side, a governmental centralised committee is in charge of the issue. The Alsatian and Lorrain notables the commission includes have in common the fact that they are activists of the French minded current, which is not really representative of the local public opinion (much more reserved on the question of national belonging). The German government also consults a few personalities (some Christian-democrats like Eugene Ricklin or Karl Hauss), but the Alsatian-Lorrainers are not associated to the debates led in governmental circles. Most of the projects are elaborated by the government and tiny circles of civil servants. There is nevertheless an important difference between France and Germany in matters of governmental practices. Whereas the German military Headquarters take more and more importance beside the civil government, in France the Warfare and the definition of war purposes is totally in the hands of the civil government, at least when Clemenceau becomes President of the Council of Ministers.

From 1915 to 1918, two ways of seeing the future of Alsace-Lorraine can be observed: with or without taking into account the local particularities. In Berlin, the debate about autonomy opposes supporters and opponents of a recognition of a regional identity. And the impossibility to solve the problem is linked to the division of the German political staff on that issue. In Paris, at the same time, two manners to deal with the future of Alsace-Lorraine can be identified, two manners which are closely linked to the idea of the Republic and of State unity: centralism or decentralization. The administration which was appointed in Alsace-Lorraine in 1918 quickly carries out a "Jacobine" programme of centralization, that leads to some discontent (the "Alsatian malaise"). In November 1918, Alsations and Lorrainers welcome the French troops triumphantly, but they still remain attached to their identity, and to a form of local administration that characterized the German times. That's what Alexandre Millerand, the first "Commissaire de la République" (regional prefect) sent to Strasbourg, understands very well when he declares to the population in Strasbourg: "*Alsations and Lorrainers stick to their customs. They are passionately French, that doesn't prevent them from being at the same time closely attached to their little homeland. How can France complain about a particularism which was the best defence against German domination*⁴⁴?"

On the other hand, German projects could not immediately be put into practice, because after 1918 the destiny of Alsace-Lorraine was in French hands. But the status of Alsace-Lorraine will be in question again in 1940, when the German national-socialist government decides to *de facto* annex Alsace-Lorraine and to divide it into two parts. It is then decided not to re-establish the old structure of

44. Alexandre Millerand, *Le retour de l'Alsace-Lorraine à la France* (Paris, E. Fasquelle, 1923), 175.

Reichsland, which raised so much trouble, but to divide the region into two sectors (*Gau Westmark* and *Gau Oberrhein*), respectively united to Palatinate and to Baden.

In the long run, the global process of integration in the French republic will lead to political discontent and the surge of an autonomist movement during the years 1925-1930. The most significant frictions could be observed with religious issues: the French secular culture was bound to come into opposition with the Alsatian politicised Catholicism. Linguistic matters also led to some conflicts, even if the government's linguistic policy remains globally moderate until the Second World War. Confrontation about integration into France also led to compromises. The best example of it is the maintaining of a local specific legislation. Not only was this local legislation never seriously threatened in its principles, but some local laws of Alsace-Lorraine were used as models for laws voted afterwards by the French Parliament (law on personal bankruptcy, legal status of trade companies). The influence of Alsatian politicians was particularly decisive to introduce forms of administrative decentralisation in France.

Through these experiences in Paris as well as in Berlin, one can learn about some Alsatian-Lorrain specificities, whose complexity both the French and the German alike failed to understand and to manage. They both faced some of the same obstacles and hit part of the cultural heritage left by the enemy nation in this crossroad region. Nevertheless, it can be highlighted that all these tensions have been positive. The local legislation in Alsace-Lorraine has helped France to build up its own Welfare system, which is one of the most protective ones in Europe. It was an Alsatian, Pierre Pflimlin, who convinced De Gaulle to initiate some decentralization in France. It was a Lorrainer, Robert Schuman, who was one of the pioneers of French-German reconciliation and of European construction.



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Administrative map of Alsace-Lorraine before 1914 (© Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire, Strasbourg).



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View of Strasbourg, capital of the *Reichsland*
(© Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire, Strasbourg).



Visit of general Hirschauer in Dannemarie, French Alsace, August 7th 1917
(© Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine).



A French class in Dannemarie, June 19th 1916
(© Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine).



Visit of the King of Bavaria Ludwig III in Wintzenheim, German Alsace, August 15th 1915
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The French troops entering Mulhouse [photo. J. Risler],
(© Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire, Strasbourg).

POLITICAL DISCOURSE AS ROMANIA ENTERED WORLD WAR I

An Analysis of the Speeches Given in the Chamber of Deputies, 1916



MIHNEA-SIMION STOICA

Abstract

Romania entered World War I in August 1916 and, given the country's foreseeable decision to cease its neutrality status, political debates in the Chamber of Deputies at the time proved - unsurprisingly - to be very lively, covering a wide range of issues. Commerce, migration, the status of the military personnel, fear of foreign conspiracies, but also internal party political controversies were only some of the most heated issues on the agenda. Such topics were placed in a context which all national political actors understood: preparing the decision to join either of the belligerent powers, so that Romania could claim what it considered to deserve both territorially and politically in the region. Our current paper will try to shed light not only upon the most important topics that were under the scrutiny of the members of the lower house of the Romanian Parliament in 1916, when the country decided to join the Entente, but it will also show the dynamic of the discussions, emphasizing how the debates evolved throughout the year and analyzing the most important ideological divisions between the political parties.

Keywords

Romania, World War I, political debates, Chamber of Deputies, Critical Discourse Analysis

Introduction

TWO YEARS had passed since the outbreak of the First World War and, as everywhere else in Europe, the Members of Parliament in Bucharest were intensely debating the evolution of the conflagration and its repercussions on the World, on Europe and especially on their country. Given the fact that Romania had decided to keep its neutrality ever since the beginning of the War, much of the political debates going on revolved around the issue of the country's status in the near future. Romania's situation was a very delicate one, taking into consideration its geographical position and its political closeness to Italy, which also maintained its neutrality during the first year of the conflict, but which would later become part of the Great War on the side of the Entente in 1915, approximately one year before Romania decided to drop its neutrality status and do the same. The regional context was by no means a comfortable one either, as there was great dissatisfaction in the Habsburg Empire with respect to the position of Romania, which turned down all diplomatic offers from the Austro-Hungarians to join the war on their side. The repeated failures of the neighbour's attempts to persuade Bucharest into fighting for a common cause seemed to have been generated by the intransigence of the Hungarian leaders with respect to the rights given to Romanians living in the Habsburg Empire. Their attitude remained unshaken despite interventions from Austrian and even German leaders, who tried to convince Hungarian politicians that concessions would be to the benefit of both parties¹. Moreover, the growing interest of the public opinion on what was called the "aspiration for national unity" – in Romania as well as in all Balkan states – made it quite difficult for collaboration with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Moreover, the public opinion in Romania considered that the Habsburgs were engaging Romanians from Transylvania in a war that they had nothing to do with, thus escalating the already existing diplomatic tensions. Between 1914 and 1918, more than half of all men from Transylvania mobilized in the Great War by the Habsburg Empire were Romanians, which generated various political-military, socio-economic and cultural-mental mutations².

In any case, for quite a good number of years now the foreign policy of Romania had kept an arm's length *vis-à-vis* the strategic interests in the region of the neighbouring Empire³. It was a tendency that seemed to have intensified with the unfolding of the Second Balkan War. In spite of this situation, Romania's neutrality turned

1. Anastasie Iordache, *Reorientarea politică a României și neutralitatea armată 1914 – 1916* (Bucharest: Paideia, 1998), 140.
2. Ioan Bolovan, *Primul Război Mondial și Realitățile Demografice din Transilvania. Familie, Moralitate și Raporturi de Gen* (Cluj-Napoca: Școala Ardeleană), 24.
3. Constantin Nuțu, *România în anii neutralității (1914-1916)* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1972), 57.

out to be quite a surprise for the Central Powers, which assumed from the very beginning that, together with Bulgaria, Romania would soon join them⁴.

However, Romania was about to decide otherwise. On the 3rd of August 1914, following the request of King Carol I, some of the country's most influential political leaders – both from Government and Opposition – met in a so-called Crown Council at the king's summer residence in Sinaia, where Romania's destiny for the upcoming years was to be decided. The opinions were less diverse than the monarch would have expected, as almost all those present pointed towards neutrality as the best solution for the country. The participants brought very well grounded arguments, anchored in the political and diplomatic realities of the times. What complicated the discussions was the secret treaty signed in 1913 between Romania and The Central Powers, which would compel Bucharest to offer military support in case of an attack against the latter. Since the situation was quite different from the one stipulated in the treaty, it was considered that there was no need to follow it. Therefore, the outcome of the meeting was rather foreseeable: Romania had to declare its neutrality. Despite the fact that all parties present in Sinaia, with the exception of the king⁵, were satisfied with the decision, they all knew that this was just a decision for the moment and that, on the long run, Romania would have to steer into one direction or another⁶.

In less than a year, the neutrality status Romania managed to uphold turned out to put heavy pressure on its shoulders, as the country's leaders were now facing great expectations from both the public opinion (on either sides of the Carpathian Mountains) and the country's political allies, especially Italy. Grasping its hesitation in joining the Central Powers, the belligerents within the Entente carried negotiations amongst themselves on how to best answer Romania's conditions of joining the war. The situation had repercussions on the internal political situation as well, as the liberal Government led by Ion I. C. Brătianu was now being accused of double-talk and lack of determination in deciding the direction the country should take. The Conservative Party, led by Alexandru Marghiloman, was constantly fuelling such accusations against the Government in their pursuit to oust the liberals. Given Brătianu's political agility, the attempts of the conservatives to do so failed altogether, despite their alleged support from the Central Powers⁷. In spite of such disputes and unsuccessful political attempts from the opposition, 1914 and 1915 did not present any novelties related to the status of Romania, as the country only debated the need to change its neutrality status, but did not take a firm decision in this sense.

4. Ian F.W. Beckett, *The Great War: 1914 – 1918* (London: Routledge, 2013), 103.

5. Given his personal and political background, King Carol I seemed to be closer to the idea that Romania should join the war on the side of the Central Powers.

6. Ion Bulei, *Arcul Asteptarii*. (Bucharest, Editura Eminescu, 1981), 67.

7. Constantin Nuțu, *România în anii neutralității*, 249.

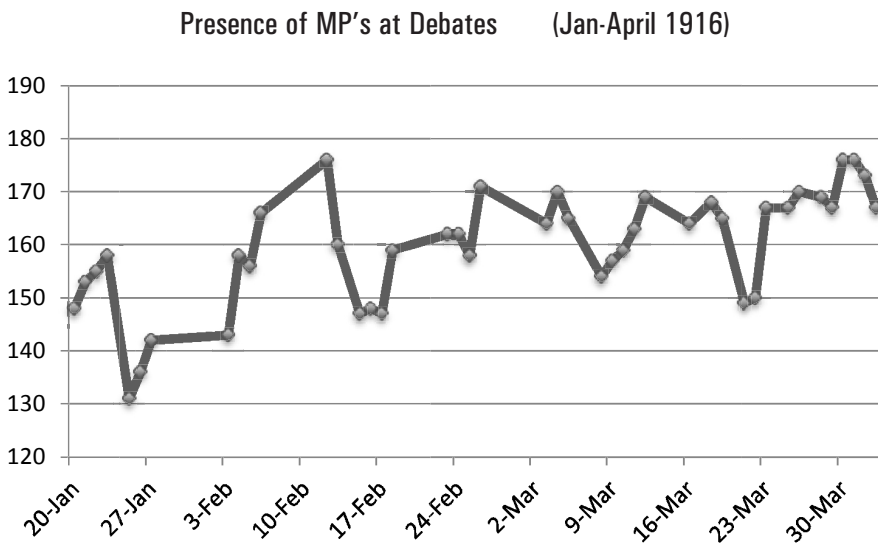
Methodology

THE AIM of any political discourse is that of attracting supporters around an idea and creating a sense of belonging. Therefore, the struggle of a politician lays in proving that the arguments that he or she is presenting are valid, as opposed to those supported by their rivals⁸. At stake for a politician is the power, which can be attained by legitimizing the ideas or actions around which the discourse is built⁹. As such, language plays a very important role, because it is a constant feature of the political process, which would be virtually unimaginable without language. In order to best capture the main elements of rhetoric reflected in the political communication strategies used in the Romanian Chamber of Deputies during the debates of 1916, we will use a method that was influenced by the Frankfurt School and which has now become quite well known in literature as the critical discourse analysis (CDA). Teun van Dijk, one of the best known scholars of the CDA, described it as a type of discourse analytical research that studies how power is “enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text”, mostly in the social and political context. The method emerged during the 80’s, was perfected during the 90’s¹⁰, and today it is considered to represent one of the most influential branches of discourse analysis. On a micro level, it focuses on the linguistic features of concrete instances of discourse: vocabulary, grammar and text structure are usually analyzed because they are considered to reveal power-related elements¹¹.

The CDA is a very valuable method because it does not view analyzed texts as isolated entities, but understands them as being generated in a fairly complex framework that is very much conditioned by cultural, social and political sensibilities. For the method at hand, discourse is socially constitutive and at the same time socially conditioned. It entails an interdisciplinary approach, which is exactly what the current paper will do throughout the following pages, viewing the texts from both a historical and a political point of view. The methodological approach of the CDA has been perfected over time, allowing the discourse to be analyzed in a very orderly manner. In fact, the political discourse is a so-called “preferred topic” for the CDA, having been developed by scholars such as Ruth Wodak, Paul Chilton, Norman Fairclough, and Anna Mauranen¹².

8. Mihnea-Simion Stoica, “The Corrosion of an Ideological Identity? Differences between the Christian-Democratic Discourse and the Attitude of the Faithful Electorate”, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, 13 (2004): 23.
9. Andreea Voina, “Michelle Obama – “How hard you work”. Critical Discourse Analysis”, *PR Trend. Developments and Trends in Communication*, ed. Delia Cristina Balaban et al. (Mittweida: AMAK, 2015), 211.
10. Amongst those who brought their important contribution to developing CDA: Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak.
11. Teun Van Dijk, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, 352, Accessed January 20, 2016, <http://www.discourses.org/OldArticles/Critical%20discourse%20analysis.pdf>
12. Blommaert, J., Bulcaen, C. “Critical Discourse Analysis”, *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 29 (2000): 450.

We started our research with a strictly quantitative overview of the presence of the MP's at the debates in the Chamber of Deputies along the year 1916. The graph below was created based on the data available in the appendix to the Official Gazette, a document that contains the minutes of the Assemblies of the Chamber of Deputies, alongside the information containing the number of MP's present and absent, the name of those who do not attend and their motive of absence. According to the annexes found and analyzed for the current paper, the parliamentary debates of 1916 started on the 20th of January, ended on the 7th of April and were then resumed only in December. As interesting as it might have been to analyze the debates occasioned by the decision of Romania to enter the war on the 28th of July – or at least that of Italy joining its forces with the Entente –, there is no such data available, most probably given the fact that the Parliament was on vacation at the time. The graph shows that during the aforementioned period (January-April 1916), the lowest number of Deputies joining the debates was recorded on the 25th of January (131 out of a total of 190) and the dates with the highest number of Deputies to attend the debates were the 12th of February, 30th and 31st of March.



We will proceed with a general presentation of the debates during 1915 and 1916, and then focus on one of the dates mentioned above, i.e. the 30th of March 1916. Given the aim and the length of the current paper, analyzing more than one of these debates would exceed the limits of the study. First of all, we assume that analyzing the debate with the greatest number of MP's present will allow us to find a higher number of issues that are central to the concern of the debaters and that are more representative for the entire political class of the time. Secondly, we

are interested in the range of issues that constitute the interest of politicians. We assume that given the high number of attendees, the range of issues that they cover is wide (or at least wider than if there was poorer attendance). This second hypothesis is based on the simple assumption that a greater number of MP's present gives more opportunities for the political parties to express their concerns and influence the agenda of the debate.

An overview of the parliamentary debates of 1915 and 1916

THE POLITICAL mutations on the Romanian political scene were intensifying with the imminence of Romania's changing war status. The parliamentary opposition to the liberal government was portrayed as weak, the Conservative Party having been divided ever since January 1915 over issues that seemed to be related rather to leadership vanities (between Al. Marghiloman and Nicolae Filipescu) than to serious ideological disputes.¹³ Italy's decision to enter the war, in April 1915, represented the breaking point of the Conservative Party. Its Congress, organized on the 19th of May 1915, recorded the formal split of the party between those who asked for neutrality and those who supported an intervention against the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the latter having now formed the Conservative Democratic Party, led by Take Ionescu.

The topics of debate on the agenda of the Chamber of Deputies during 1915 and 1916 were diverse and, despite having been fuelled by party affiliations (as normally expected with such debates), they often focused on important political, social and diplomatic aspects, especially given the preparations for war. Under a handful of aspects, the first speeches of 1916 were an extension of the ones delivered in 1915, despite the fact that the surrounding reality was rapidly evolving. Allegations of amphibology and double-talk, but also scepticism related to the loyalty of various politicians towards the country remained a constant feature of the speeches. Nicolae Flea's (of the Conservative Party) phrase in 1915 is of reference from this point of view: "I am not a member of any trading company, whereas some of you speak here, and then go directly to Berlin to claim your part from the trading companies of which you are members". The beginning of 1915 brought about serious questions related to the steps that Romania was going to take next. A. C. Cuza, MP of the Nationalist-Democratic Party (a splinter of the Conservative Party) talked about the five hypotheses for the future of Romania: (1) the so-called armed expectancy, i.e. "waiting for the right moment to jump into the camp of the winners", (2) definitive neutrality, (3) joining the Central Powers, in which case it was considered that Moldova would immediately be cap-

13. I. Bulei, *Arcul Așteptării*, 199.

tured by Russia, and Bulgaria would feel entitled to ask for Dobrogea, whereas Austria-Hungary would never give up Transylvania, (4) joining the Entente, a step which the politician considered Romania should take if and only if the guarantees which Russia presented were ensured by the UK and France alike. And then there was (5) the option for an independent Italian-Romanian Alliance, which was considered to be effective for keeping the *status quo*, but which was thought could endanger France, the “Latin sister” of the two countries¹⁴.

Moreover, one year before the country entered the war, the situation of the Romanian schools and the Orthodox Churches in Transylvania were also issues of heated debate, and such topics were very dramatically framed. Related to this topic, Nicolae Iorga, a conservative with a profound sympathy for the Entente, declared: “This is not rhetoric [...] but the voice of a bleeding heart: hundreds of venerable priests [...] are cramped in the dungeons of Cluj, Arad. The Romanian School and Church yearn for a ray of light, a breath of air”. The weak material preparations of Romania for the war also constituted an important topic of debate, together with the intensions of the main belligerents, the actions of which were considered to directly affect Romania. The speeches accused the Russian Empire of undertaking all actions to gain complete control over the Black Sea region and portrayed the Austro-Hungarian Empire as unwilling to relinquish its control over Transylvania. Towards the end of 1915, the debates also included the situation of Moldova and the claims of Romania over the territory, Dr. C. I. Istrati (President of the Romanian Academy between 1913 and 1916, and MP of the Conservative Party) having questioned the ethics of claiming Transylvania at the expense of losing Moldova. The year 1916 started with debates on the overall living costs of Romanians¹⁵. The MP’s were also concerned with the partial elections that the Parliament had to validate at the beginning of the year. There were many debates revolving around the ethnic origins of one of the victors in a constituency: his father was of Bulgarian origin, an issue that sparked discontent amongst the MP’s, some of which considered the politician unsuited to be a representative in the Romanian Parliament. Discussions about the war had an increasingly important role, the Ministry of War having been very actively involved. Most of the discourses in the Chamber of Deputies during 1916 were under the auspices of the need to enter the armed conflict. In other words, the war now constituted an ideology in itself.

14. Annex of the Official Monitor (1915-1916), 194.

15. Annex of the Official Monitor (1915-1916), 133.

An in-depth perspective of the debate

THE ANALYSIS of the debates registered on the 30th of March 1916 indicates that the topics lying at the centre of the political interests have not been as diverse as anticipated. There is no doubt that *war* was the issue around which all discussions revolved, but rarely so from a military point of view. Debates included, as an example, the issue of prices for *wool*, considered to be an object of first necessity in the context of war. Alexandru Radovici, Romanian Minister of Industry and Commerce, who was present in the Parliament during the debates, received the request to establish a fixed price for wool, given that clothing had then become inaccessible for people. The clothing industry had reportedly become very busy with the orders from the Ministry of War. Another interesting topic that the Minister raised referred to *nails*, which he announced could be found in a far less number than needed. Establishing a fixed price for nails, the Minister declared, would be more harmful than useful, given the national economic context¹⁶. *Nutrition and food* also emerged as one of the most important topics of debate, with Take Ionescu, leader of the Conservative Democratic Party, declaring it to be unnatural that wheat, flour and bread were “more expensive than in normal times”¹⁷. To refer to the war, the MP’s used words or phrases such as “the times that we live today”¹⁸, “this crisis” or “the misfortunes affecting Europe”¹⁹. Other words that we believed would be quite frequently mentioned in the debates proved to be only marginal in the debate analysed.

Petty political disputes also received – surprisingly enough – quite a considerable amount of attention from the Members of Parliament, most of the time constituting personal issues between politicians. Given the amount of text dedicated to these disputes, one can understand that debates around such topics were time-consuming but nevertheless seemed inevitable, despite the very serious international context. Flamboyant declarations were also very much present in the discourse of politicians, who talked about “national consciousness”, “self-sacrifice”, “the destiny of the state and of the nation”.

Conclusions

THE DEBATES in the Romanian Chamber of Deputies only months before the country took the long-awaited decision of engaging into war focused mainly on the effects of the international conflict over the country and referred to quite a narrow set of national decisions that could influence the status of Romania

16. Annex of the Official Monitor (1915-1916), 1009.

17. Annex of the Official Monitor (1915-1916), 1014.

18. Annex of the Official Monitor (1915-1916), 1015.

19. Annex of the Official Monitor (1915-1916), 1017.

on both short and long term, regardless of its final decision – neutrality or siding with one of the two major belligerents. In order to have an in-depth view of the topics that constituted the main elements of interest during the time, we focused on one of dates, i.e. 30th of March 1916, when most MP's attended the Parliament's regular meeting, assuming such a situation would reflect a diversity of topics. However, this was not the case. The study also highlights the fact that an exceptional international situation always constitutes a good opportunity to exhibit a flamboyant discourse, and that even events of such a great amplitude cannot withhold petty political disputes. The limitations of the study are represented by the fact that it focuses only on one debate (out of the hundreds in the Chamber of Deputies between 1914 and 1916) and therefore it cannot constitute a representative account of the extremely complex picture that represented the political discourse of the time. However, the paper brings a contribution to understanding the political context of 1916 and the discussions that preceded the decision that the Romanian Government took in August the same year: that of entering the First World War.

SKETCHES FROM THE ACTIVITY OF ROMANIAN MPs IN THE PARLIAMENT OF HUNGARY DURING WORLD WAR I



VLAD POPOVICI

Abstract

Between 1914 and 1918 a number of fourteen Romanian MPs were present in the Parliament of Hungary, nine of them elected on the lists of the governing party, other five on the lists of the Romanian National Party. This paper aims at offering an overview of their parliamentary activity during the time of the Great War, stressing on the main subjects touched by their speeches and interpellations. The research of the Romanian MPs' parliamentary activity has been focused until now mainly on the representatives of the National Party and on topics closely related to the general situation of the Romanians in Hungary. For this reason, we expanded the research area by also including speeches of the Romanian representatives of the Hungarian parties and comparing the two categories, in order to highlight the differences generated by their opposable political agendas.

Keywords

Parliamentary speeches, Hungary, Romanians, World War I

State of knowledge and sources

BETWEEN 1914 and 1918 a number of fourteen Romanian MPs were present in the Parliament of Hungary, nine of them elected on the lists of the governing party and the other five on the lists of the Romanian National Party (RNP). My paper aims at offering a glimpse of their parliamentary activity during the time of the Great War, stressing on the main subjects touched by their speeches and interpellations, such as: the Sarajevo assassination and the outbreak of the war, Romania's entry into war in 1916, the political situation in Hungary, and the situation of the Romanians in Transylvania after 1916, especially the measures to be taken in early 1917 against the Romanians from southern Transylvania who had collaborated with the temporary occupation forces.

To begin with, two things should be highlighted regarding the research of the Romanian MPs' activity in the Parliament of Hungary. First, until recently, the studies concerning this category of political elite have been focused almost exclusively on the representatives of the National Party and on topics closely related to the general situation of the Romanians in Hungary¹. No research and almost no papers except scattered biographical sketches had in view the Romanian MPs elected on the lists of the Hungarian parties (neither governmental nor oppositional). A noteworthy exception is represented by Marius Eppel's biography of Metropolitan Vasile Mangra,² and recently Ovidiu Iudean's thesis and papers unveiled this particular category of politicians, but only starting with 1881.³

Second, both mainstream research and these new approaches stopped at the beginning of World War I, and there is little historical literature on the activity of the Romanian MPs in the Hungarian Parliament between 1914 and 1918.⁴ The

1. A selection of the main titles on the topic: Teodor V. Păcățian, *Cartea de aur sau luptele politice-naționale ale românilor de sub coroana ungară*, vol. I-VIII (Sibiu, 1904-1915); Petru Bona, "Aspecte ale luptei deputaților români în Parlamentul maghiar pentru drepturi naționale și politice (1869-1872)", *Studii și Comunicări de Etnografie-Istorie*, III (1979): 361-373; Stelian Mândruț, *Mișcarea națională și activitatea parlamentară a deputaților Partidului Național Român din Transilvania între anii 1905-1910* (Oradea, Fundația Culturală "Cele Trei Crișuri", 1995), 82-121; E. Glück, "Contribuții cu privire la activitatea parlamentară a lui Ștefan Cicio Pop în primii ani ai activismului (1905-1907)", *Studia Universitatis 'Vasile Goldiș' Arad*, seria A, XII (2002): 194-201; Idem, "Activitatea parlamentară a lui Ștefan Cicio Pop în pragul Primului Război Mondial (1910-1914)", *Aradul Cultural*, X, 1-2 (2003): 74-77; Lucian Petraș, "Activitatea desfășurată de Ștefan Cicio-Pop în legislatura parlamentară 1910-1914", *Revista Bistriței*, XIX (2005): 249-256.
2. Marius Eppel, *Vasile Mangra. Activitatea politică 1875-1918* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2004).
3. Ovidiu Iudean, *Deputați guvernamentali români în parlamentul de la Budapesta (sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea - începutul secolului XX)*, PhD. Theses at Babeș-Bolyai University (Cluj-Napoca, 2012).
4. Gheorghe Ciul, "Ștefan Cicio Pop și colaborarea dintre români, sârbi și slovaci (1893-1918)", *Ziridava*, VI (1976): 227-229; Nicolae Roșuș, "Activitatea politică a deputaților arădeni între

collection of parliamentary speeches edited by Balázs Sándor hosts a small selection of texts (17), pertaining exclusively to the nationalist MPs.⁵ Other small biographical pieces can also be mentioned, yet no comprehensive studies exist.⁶ Due to this particular situation, there was no hope for one paper to cover all of the parliamentary activity of the aforementioned deputies, a reason more to concentrate on several chronological moments and thematic landmarks.

When dealing with parliamentary speeches in Hungary, the only comprehensive source remains *Képviselőházi Napló*. In our paper, however, we have also used Romanian newspapers, mainly *Românul* and *Gazeta Transilvaniei*. The reason for double-checking the official journal of the Parliament is related to the analysis of the speeches' dissemination among the general public. The fancy elaborated speeches were rhetorical exercises taking place high above the general public, within the Parliament Hall. And nobody was reading *Képviselőházi Napló*, especially during the war; people were reading daily political newspapers, which were subjected to censorship and consequently self-censorship of the editorial team. Thus, we thought it equally interesting to have a look at the Romanian press, in order to get a glimpse of the selections made by the editors from these speeches. Only by doing so, one can build an image of what the general Romanian public knew about these MPs' activity.

Romanian MPs in the Hungarian Parliament in 1910-1918

BEFORE LOOKING at the speeches, a short presentation of the Romanian MPs in the Hungarian Parliament would be in order, starting with the larger group, consisting of the so called 'governmental' MPs. Two of them came from Bihar: Metropolitan (from 1916 on) Vasile Mangra⁷ and Gabriel Rednic, son of a Greek-Catholic archpriest, a former railway clerk, who won his seat in 1910 against Vasile Lucaciu.⁸ From Năsăud came Ioan Ciocan, a professor of Romanian Literature at the University in Budapest⁹ and after his death in 1915, the seat

anii 1905-1918", Ziridava, IX (1978): 219-270; E. Glück, "Date în legătură cu activitatea lui Ștefan Cicio-Pop în perioada anilor 1914-1918", *Studia Universitatis 'Vasile Goldiș' Arad*, seria A, X (2000): 38-43; M. Eppel, *Vasile Mangra. Activitatea politică 1875-1918*, 267-278.

5. Balázs Sándor, *Román képviselet a dualista Magyarország parlamentjében. Kötet 1. Beszéddek 1906-1909. Kötet 2. Beszéddek 1910-1918* (Kolozsvár: Kriterion, 2010).
6. Iuliana Sranko, "Ziarul Românul despre activitatea politică a lui Ștefan Cicio Pop în anii 1911-1916", in *Ștefan Cicio Pop. Studii*, ed. by Corneliu Pădurean, ed. a 2-a (Arad: Gutenberg Univers, 2013), 107-130.
7. M. Eppel, *Un mitropolit și epoca sa: Vasile Mangra (1850-1918)* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2006).
8. O. Iudean, *Deputați guvernamentali români*, 97-98.
9. O. Iudean, *Deputați guvernamentali români*, 54-57.

was taken over by Ioan Gethie, headmaster of the Năsăud Gymnasium.¹⁰ The constituency of Caransebeș was represented by Constantin Burdia, a shady character who was forced to resign in early 1915 due to incompatibilities and accusations of corruption.¹¹ The constituency of Sasca was represented by one of Burdia's lieutenants, Petru Korkan,¹² an equally shady figure who won his seat in 1913, following the untimely death of baron Ioan Duca de Cadar.¹³ Also from Banat came Iosif Siegescu, a rising politician, who would take Ioan Ciocan's seat as professor of Romanian Literature at the University. He remained in Hungary after 1918 and became dean of the Faculty of Philosophy within the University in Budapest (by then called Pázmány Péter) between 1921 and 1923.¹⁴ From Maramureș came Petru Mihály jr., a member of an important noble family and inheritor of the parliamentary seat his father had constantly maintained for the previous four decades. After 1918 he continued his career in the administration of the Kingdom of Romania and became prefect of the Maramureș County.¹⁵ Also from Maramureș came Vasile Negre, a career politician who, like Siegescu, remained in Hungary after 1918 and who, during the war, switched positions several times with a close relative of his wife: Jozsef Illyasevics.¹⁶ Some of these MPs were even elected in various parliamentary commissions, thus increasing their influence: Iosif Siegescu was a member of the public education commission, Gavril Rednic of the emigration commission, and Gethie Ioan of the inquiry commission. Even without entering detailed prosopographical analyses, it is easy to observe that the body of the Romanian governmental MPs was formed mainly by career politicians, people with a *cursus honorum* in administration, many of them former MPs or closely related to former MPs, and some of whom followed the same path after 1918, regardless the side of the border they chose to remain in.

However, the smaller nationalist MPs' corpus was not highly different: Alexandru Vaida Voevod, Nicolae Șerban, Teodor Mihaly, Ștefan Cicio-Pop and archpriest Vasile Demian were all seasoned politicians, most of them former MPs and leaders of the Romanian National Party, who after 1918 followed more or less successful careers in Greater Romania.¹⁷ The biggest difference that stands out between

10. Not to be mistaken with the lawyer from Sălaj bearing the same name (gratitude to O. Iudean for highlighting this issue at the right time). I. Gethie enjoys no biographical study up to this day.

11. O. Iudean, *Deputați guvernamentali români*, 48-52; *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, LXXVIII, 1915, 94, 2/15 May, 1.

12. *Képviseelőházi Napló*, 1910-1918, XIX, 449, 5 May 1913, 4.

13. Ovidiu Iudean, *Deputați guvernamentali români*, 63-66.

14. Ovidiu Iudean, *Deputați guvernamentali români*, 107-110.

15. Ovidiu Iudean, *Deputați guvernamentali români*, 86-88.

16. Ovidiu Iudean, *Deputați guvernamentali români*, 90-92.

17. S. Mândruț, *Mișcarea națională și activitatea parlamentară*, 75-93, 145-157; Vlad Popovici, *Studies on the Romanian political elite from Transylvania and Hungary (1861-1918)* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2012), 44, 73, 74, 79; O. Iudean, *Deputați guvernamentali români*, 104-107.

the two groups is due to the field of activity before entering the Parliament. While the 'governmental' MPs sprung mainly from the administrative milieu, the nationalists came from the area of liberal professions: lawyers, physicians, land owners. Both categories however included one representative of the Church, proof of this institution's strong grip on Romanian politics at all levels.

Of course, political affiliation (on grounds of either true beliefs, or tactical reasons) also shaped their activity and some differences between the two aforementioned groups don't take long to appear. One would expect the nationalist MPs to be more vocal, more present in debates and overall more active. And this is true for some of them. But this does not explain the very low level of activity of some 'governmental' MPs, like Petru Korkan or Ioan Gethie, for example, who didn't even seem to be present at most of the meetings. At the other end of the rope, among the most active Romanians, one finds both nationalists (like Vaida Voevod and Cicio Pop) and government supporters (like Siegescu). In the special case of V. Mangra, the election as Metropolitan of the Romanian Orthodox Church had consistently lowered his otherwise active parliamentary presence.¹⁸

To describe all their activity and to detail the debates they entered would mean writing at least another volume similar to Teodor V. Păcățian's *Golden Book*.¹⁹ For obvious reasons, the current paper is built on a small but hopefully representative selection of texts, analysing only particular speeches, given in important historical moments (e.g. the outbreak of the war, Romania's entry into war, the collapse of the Monarchy) or related to highly sensitive issues (the Romanians' fidelity towards the Hungarian state). The goal is to highlight on the one hand the changes occurring over time in the nationalist MPs' discourses, and on the other hand to offer a glimpse at the 'governmental' MPs' position.

Selected activity and speeches of the Romanian MPs

THE ASSASSINATION of Franz Ferdinand and his wife, followed by the outbreak of the war, brought in several changes in the parliamentary activity of the Romanian MPs, especially of the nationalist ones. At the beginning, their position and attitude was consistent with the general feelings: they deplored the assassination and in the light of the events to come, they reaffirmed the traditional loyalty of the Romanians towards the Monarchy and the ruling house.

One of the few papers on this issue mentioned that differences in attitude did exist even among the nationalist MPs. According to N. Roșuț, while A. Vaida Voevod and T. Mihali openly supported Austria-Hungary's entry into war and emphasized on the Romanians loyalty towards the House of Habsburg, others, like Șt. Cicio

18. M. Eppel, *Vasile Mangra. Activitatea politică 1875-1918*, 267-278.

Pop were more reserved.²⁰ However, the fragment below, part of a speech held by Șt. Cicio Pop on 30 June 1914 shows that, at least in what concerns the openly declared loyalty, he made no different stand, and given the fresh and heavy memory of the Sarajevo assassination it would have been hard to do otherwise:

The bullet that turned off the noble life of the throne heir, Franz Ferdinand, and of his sublime wife, goes through the hearts of millions and millions and the whole population of the Double Monarchy, with deep mourning and indescribable pain, regardless religion or nationality gathers round the two coffins which now hold within for eternity great many hopes and rightful expectations.

The Romanian people, whose traditional loyalty and attachment towards the ruler and the Ruling House lights, like a shining spark, past and present, condemns with deep indignation the wretched and hateful act, born in the minds lacking human feelings, and painfully mourns the great passed away of the Monarchy and of all human kind, and prays for the consolation of the children left orphan, the people of the Monarchy and of the Ruling House, while bowing to the veiled will of almighty God.²¹

The meeting of 28 July 1914 ended the ordinary cycle of the Hungarian Chamber of Deputies, which from now on was to be summoned only in extraordinary meetings.

During one of the first meetings of November 1914, Șt. Cicio Pop, one of the most active nationalist MPs, proposed that the families of the people who had been relocated due to war-related reasons should also benefit from war aid. The proposition was opposed by Prime Minister Tisza István.²²

Given the exceptional situation and the prolongation of a conflict everybody expected to be short and glorious, in autumn 1915 the Romanian National Party board decided that all activities related to the national political movement would cease during the war, that the party would not engage in practical political opposition and would make known its opinion through speeches only. However, it was highlighted that this decision changed neither its specific national nor its general political goals (e.g. universal franchise).²³ The official announcement in the Parliament was made by T. Mihali.²⁴ Several weeks later, the same MP had the

19. See above footnote 1.

20. N. Roșuț, *Activitatea politică a deputaților arădeni între anii 1905-1918*, 268.

21. Balázs S., *Román képviselő a dualista Magyarország parlamentjében. Kötet 2. Beszéddek 1910-1918*, 257.

22. *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, LXXVII, 1914, 254, 18 November/1 December, 1.

23. N. Roșuț, *Activitatea politică a deputaților arădeni între anii 1905-1918*, 268.

opportunity to prove the Romanian National Party's commitment to this decision, by announcing that, although the Hungarian government took no steps towards easing the situation of the Romanians, despite their proved heroism on the battlefield, the Party voted in favour of the projected budget out of consideration for the common good and the common goal: ultimate victory.²⁵

The nationalist MPs faced a hard decision after Romania entered the war against Austria-Hungary, in August 1916. Under the circumstances, Șt. Cicio Pop presented the official position of the Romanian National Party, which was up to the moment:

Esteemed House! The Romanian National Party in Hungary heard with astonishment the news that our neighbour Romania joined the lines of our country's enemies and declared war on our Monarchy. We are astonished because we have always considered impossible for Romania to fight against the Monarchy in which are now living, protected by the mighty Habsburg dynasty, several millions of Romanians, with faith and welcomed progress, and we have considered it would be impossible for Romania to make an alliance with the Russian Empire, the one that endangers the most the existence of the Romanian nation, since the very history of Romania stands proof of Russia's treachery and lack of gratitude.²⁶

The speech then emphasized on the brotherhood between the Hungarians and the Romanians and their unity in defending the country throughout the centuries against all enemies, the well-known loyalty of the Romanians towards the throne and the motherland, and the fact that all Romanians in Hungary would continue to do their duty regardless of the nature of the enemy. Unlike other times, this speech was welcomed with ovations by the majority of the House members, the more so as the Romanian army was still in full offensive in southern Transylvania at that time (3 September 1916).

Of course, there was no way around for the MPs of the National Party: they had to openly declare faithfulness to the throne and to the country on behalf of all the Romanians in Hungary, despite their true feelings. Romania's entry into war against the Central Powers brought a very high pressure on Romanians living in Hungary, at all social and professional levels. While the most affected category were the intellectuals (priests, teachers), peasants and politicians alike were not spared.

24. N. Roșuț, *Activitatea politică a deputaților*.

25. *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, LXXVII, 1914, 256, 20 November/3 December, 2; *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 258, 23 November/6 December, 1.

26. Balázs S., *Román képviselet a dualista Magyarországi parlamentjében. Kötet 2. Beszéddek 1910-1918*, 260.

The case of Nicolae Şerban, a nationalist MP from Făgăraş County, in southern Transylvania, is illustrative in this regard. During the first days of the Romanian offensive N. Şerban rushed back home and after a series of discussions with the local authorities decided to remain there and act as representative and protector of the Hungarian community. Although in the end he obeyed the general order of retreat and came back to Budapest, he was subjected to a delation accusing him of unpatriotic behaviour and an investigation was opened. In June 1917, since the investigation was trending while hostile rumours were gathering, Şerban held a speech in which he announced he renounced the parliamentary immunity in order to speed up the investigation and clear his name.²⁷

N. Şerban was a professional politician, and he held several mandates for Hungarian parties before running for the National Party in 1910. He was far from being a true nationalist and his course of action from August 1916 was a merely political one. He wanted to act as protector of the Hungarian community in Făgăraş, so regardless of the turn of events he would have grasped a good political position: if Romania had won he would have still had access to all his lands and a community to represent in politics: the Hungarians from Făgăraş; if the Romanian occupation was to be temporary he probably hoped to come up as a saviour and protector of the Hungarians who remained home. However, his political calculations only ended up in getting him investigated for possible treason – further proof of the general attitude of the Hungarian authorities towards Romanians, regardless of their public position.

After the Central Powers' successful counter-offensive in autumn-winter 1916 the situation became even harder for the Romanian nationalist MPs, unable to properly defend their position in the light of recent events. Out of the parliamentary debates sparked by the new situation one remains particularly enlightening for the political games played around the position of the Romanians in Hungary. Its special character is emphasized by the fact that it represents one of the rare moments in which three representatives of the nationalities in Hungary, with different political agendas, express their opinions on a particular subject related in equal measure to local inter-ethnic relations and the Hungarian state policy.

On 24 February 1917, the Saxon MP Carl Schmidt held a speech in which he requested financial compensations to be offered to those citizens in southern Transylvania (mainly Saxons) whose properties had been destroyed in the rush of retreat from the advancing Romanian army, or had been stolen by those who had remained in place (said to be mainly Romanians). He proposed ad-hoc tribunals to be established for each commune and cases to be judged locally, in order not to overburden the judicial system of Hungary with tens of thousands of small caus-

27. Balázs S., *Román képviselő a dualista*, 272 sqq.

es. He also proposed special punitive measures for those Transylvanian Romanians that retreated with the Romanian army into the Old Kingdom and after the occupation of Romania by the Central Powers were now slowly returning to their homes. In his view, they represented an undesirable category of citizens and the Hungarian state had to make all possible to prevent them from returning.²⁸

The first response came from Iosif Siegescu, on 28 February. The Romanian 'governmental' MP held a most diplomatic speech, in which he referred to both the issues raised by Carl Schmidt and to other issues related to the Romanians in Hungary: the situation of those from the internment camps in Sopron, and the idea of a new Romanian Moderate Party to be established. On the issue of those interned in Sopron, Siegescu, while diplomatically boasting the efficiency of Hungarian administration in the area, asked for an inquiry committee to carefully re-analyse some of their cases and to send back home those who had been wrongly interned and those who could not pose threat to the Hungarian state in their home regions. In the question of a new moderate Romanian party to be established, Siegescu firmly rejected the idea and, although without mentioning the Romanian National Party, pledged against a separate Romanian party in Hungary: the Romanians, he said, should express politically only as members of the Hungarian parties, not within an ethnically circumscribed one (this was an idea earlier expressed by the Hungarian MP Viktor Issekutz who openly requested for the RNP to be disbanded). As for Schmidt's speech, Siegescu tried to clear the image of the Romanians from Transylvania, highlighting that 20,000 deserters could not stand as proof of treason for an entire nation. He also underlined that it was a good thing such 'garbage' (the word belongs to the nationalist leader Aurel Vlad) was out of Hungary since now only the loyal Romanian citizens of the Hungarian state remained, which should ease the way towards their integration into the Hungarian political life.²⁹

Siegescu's speech was that of a politician who tried to benefit as much as possible from the situation. On the one hand, he expressed several times his confidence in the Hungarian administrative system (which was truly far from being performant in any way at the time) in order to gain the support of the governmental majority of the Chamber. On the other hand, he tried to attract the support of his co-ethnics by sustaining a re-evaluation of those interned in the Sopron camps and by rallying to the idea that not all refugees were traitors and some of them had been forcefully taken into Romania. On a third level, he used the context to give another blow to his main political adversaries: the Romanian National Party, both by rejecting the usefulness of any Romanian party in Hungary (be it

28. *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, LXXX, 1917, 19, 18 February/3 March 1; *Gazeta Transilvaniei* 20, 21 February/6 March, 2; *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 21, 23 February/8 March, 102; *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 23, 28 February/13 March, 1; *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 24, 2/15 March, 1; *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 25, 4/17 March, 3; *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 29, 14/27 March, 1.

moderate or radical) and by undermining, at discourse level, their electoral basis: since the 'garbage' (i.e. the main supporters of RNP) was out of Hungary, the very reason of this party's existence should have been, in his view, reconsidered.

Following Schmidt and Siegescu was count Tisza István, Prime Minister at the time. The conclusions of his speech were crystal clear: the Romanian intellectuals were to be blamed for the general attitude of the Romanians in Hungary and the solutions was not to pursue measures against them (this being contrary to the idea of civil and citizenship rights), but to influence the institutions that promoted Romanianism and by this to educate future generations according to the Hungarian patriotic spirit³⁰. Tisza's speech openly announced what was to come, the first step in this direction being the well-known and historiographically discussed 'cultural zone' at the eastern and southern borders of Transylvania.

Another answer to C. Schmidt came from Ștefan Cicio Pop. He reaffirmed the Romanians' faithfulness towards the throne and the country, and condemned the generalizing view offered by the Saxon MP, together with the tide of arrests that followed the return of the Hungarian administration. In this last issue he also spoke against the proposal that the population near the border areas be relocated in the inner lands. Related to Issekutz' and Siegescu's speeches on the fate of the RNP, Pop openly rejected any ideas that involved the disbandment of the Romanian National Party.³¹ It was clear that his speech tried to save what was left: it had a defensive nature, trying to clear the Romanian population in southern Transylvania of more administrative pressure than the one already existing. However, in the conclusion of his speech he strongly re-affirmed the idea that the entire succession of events from late Summer and Autumn 1916 had to do more with the Hungarian government not being able to successfully resolve the question of nationalities during the last decades, which was the main cause for the Transylvanian Romanians shifting towards the Kingdom of Romania.

Looking back to the previously mentioned four speeches, one can easily trace the different agendas of each speaker. The first three were in open offensive, trying to grasp political advantages out of the southern Transylvanian situation:

- Carl Schmidt by defending the economic interest of the Saxon communities;
- Iosif Siegescu by building political capital among Romanians and trying to eliminate Romanian political adversaries in view of a future that in the end didn't come;
- Tisza István by announcing the measures to be taken in order to slow down nationalism among the next generation of Romanians in Hungary.

The fourth one, Șt. Cicio Pop, found himself in clear defensive and all he could do was to reject the announced measures as inappropriate and reaffirm the blame

29. *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 25, 4-17 March, 3.

30. *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 22, 25 February/10 March, 2.

31. *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 27, 9/22 March, 1.

of the Hungarian governments in being unable to resolve the nationalities' question at its proper time.

It was again Șt. Cicio Pop who took the floor on 22 June 1917, in order to present the RNP's position on the new cabinet led by Esterházy Móric. He emphasized on the role played by the new King in the cabinet change and welcomed the perspective of the universal franchise which the new cabinet's programme was focused on. However, he also expressed reservation concerning the cabinet's attitude towards minorities (and especially Romanians).³² A few months later, the same reserve was expressed by Cicio Pop towards the new Wekerle Sándor cabinet, due to the fact that *during the short lived Esterházy cabinet we have seen nothing else but the leaders of the former cabinet competing with the leaders of the current cabinet, each one trying to draw up a more 'national Hungarian' franchise*.³³ In the same speech the Romanian MP raised his voice against the law project regarding the Romanian education system which was aiming towards denationalization and asked the government to stop sending Romanians into internment camps.

Another Romanian nationalist MP, Teodor Mihali, brought up the same problems in January 1918, reaffirming the RNP's lack of trust in the Wekerle cabinet, which only extended the anti-Romanian measures of the Tisza cabinet. The speech touched topics such as: the electoral franchise provision regarding illiteracy, which would have left outside a large number of Romanians, the government's actions against Romanian church autonomy, schooling system, use of mother tongue in education and buying and selling of real estate in the areas inhabited mainly by Romanians. Although the speech was mainly a defensive one, Mihali's tone was harsh and the final conclusion was that the Romanian people does not trust the new government because its programme says nothing about ending the political slavery in Hungary.³⁴

During summer of 1918, the parliamentary speeches of the Romanian MPs were oriented towards three main topics of debate. The first one was formed by the social measures expected from the government in order to protect the population by ceasing arbitrary food requisitions which were conducting to famine. The second topic was related to the ever increasing pressure against the Romanians and the camp internments. The third topic was focused on the new electoral law aiming at universal male franchise. The provisions of the project under debate were excluding a great number of non-Hungarian voters, since knowledge of Hungarian was mandatory for enjoying the right to vote. Furthermore, as Șt. Cicio Pop underlined, the new project completely excluded women, and electoral cam-

32. Balázs S., *Román képviselő a dualista Magyarország parlamentjében. Kötet 2. Beszédok 1910-1918*, 271-272.

33. *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, LXXX, 1917, new series, 16, 5/18 September, 1-2.

34. Balázs S., *Román képviselő a dualista Magyarország parlamentjében. Kötet 2. Beszédok 1910-1918*, 292-296.

paigns were almost impossible to organize for the candidates of the nationalities because they would have fallen under the regulations of the new Criminal Code which harshly incriminated agitation on nationalistic grounds. In light of such provisions, Cicio Pop, in the name of all nationalities in Hungary except the Saxons, rejected the project and asked for the 1913 Electoral Law to be reinstated, since it was more democratic than the one under debate.³⁵

The autumn of 1918 brought the end of the war and the disintegration of Austria-Hungary. Several days before the Hungarian Parliament closed its meetings, on 18 October, Al. Vaida Voevod took the floor and read the declaration of the Romanian National Party's Executive Committee. Relying on Wilson's Fourteen Points, the political leaders of the Romanians claimed the right to self-determination for their nation, rejected the Hungarian Parliament as rightful representative of the Romanians in Transylvania and Hungary, and announced that only a National Assembly had the right to decide on the nation's political future. He also openly accused Prime Minister Wekerle and count Tisza of false interpretation of the concept of democracy when promoting the idea that Hungary was a democratic country in which nationalities were treated accordingly.³⁶ During the debate, Vaida Voevod was supported by interventions from Șt. Cicio Pop and T. Mihali. His speech represents a landmark in the Romanian historical writing on the year 1918 and remains up until today one of the very few parliamentary speeches from between 1914 and 1918 translated into Romanian.³⁷

Șt. Cicio Pop was the last Romanian MP to speak in the Parliament of Hungary before 1918, having small interventions during the same meeting from 18 October. His last line remains emblematic for the Romanians' attitude during this major historical moment: *We shall not entrust ourselves to their mercy! (Nem adjuk magunkat kegyelmükre!)*

Conclusions

THE STATE of knowledge regarding the Romanian MPs' activity in the Hungarian Parliament during World War I is currently extremely low. Anthologies and collections of speeches lack almost completely, and the only one available (in Hungarian) is by far incomplete and the selection of texts remains questionable. The historical literature (both Romanian and Hungarian) leaves aside almost all Romanian MPs elected on the lists of the Hungarian parties, which constitutes a huge bias in understanding and analysing the historical facts.

35. Balázs S., *Román képviselő a dualista*, 308-315; N. Roșuț, *Activitatea politică a deputaților arădeni între anii 1905-1918*, 268.

36. *Képviselőházi Napló*, 1910-1918, LXI, 825, 24 July-16 November 1918, 314-319.

37. Ioan Scurtu, *Alba Iulia 1 Decembrie 1918* (București: Editura Sport-Turism, 1988), 104-105.

The activity of the Romanian MPs in the Parliament of Hungary, during World War I, was by far unequal, with some of them constantly taking the floor, while others did not even take part in the meetings. The smaller but most active group of nationalist MPs openly sustained the war effort and reaffirmed the Romanians' adamant loyalty towards the King and the country, but they faced the hardest situation after Romania entered the war. All previously made efforts towards supporting political claims by emphasizing the Romanians' heroism on the battlefield were scattered and even the personal freedom of some Romanian representatives was put into question. Constant objections were raised between 1916 and 1918 against the high rate of internments of Romanian intellectuals, without any real results. The issue seems to have been pressing enough even for the Romanian MPs on the government's benches, to the point in which some of them tried to build electoral capital on it, taking advantage of the defensive situation of their nationalist colleagues.

Equally strong objections with equally small results were raised against the government's measures aiming at destroying the cultural foundations of Romanian society in hope of eradicating the roots of nationalist manifestations within the time-span of a generation. The Electoral Law represented another topic of high interest, its non-democratic provisions and the conditioning of the right to vote by literacy and knowledge of Hungarian being denounced as non-democratic and dangerous for the future relations between Hungarians and the other nationalities. Social issues concerning life conditions during the war, abusive requisitions, financial support for the families of those relocated due to war-related necessities, treatment of war prisoners, etc. can also be found on the speakers' agenda.

What can be easily traced during the last two years (January 1917–October 1918) is the gradual radicalization of the nationalist MPs' discourses. Most probably the increasingly harsh political and administrative measures taken against the people they represented had a lot to do with the tone of their speeches and with the virulence they threw back accuses at Hungarian politicians. With Romania defeated, with the spectre of a future electoral franchise even more restrictive than the previous ones in regard to the ethnic minorities, and facing a full scale cultural offensive against the Romanian church and school system, there was nothing left to lose for the nationalist MPs. The radicalization of the Hungarian political environment during the final years of the war probably also left its mark.

As for the Romanian 'governmental' MPs, I. Siegescu's attitude remains symptomatic: they tried to make the most out of the Romanian National Party's defensive stance, aiming not only at taking over as much of its pool of voters as possible, but even at completely removing their adversaries from the political arena through banishment by law of national parties.

The above presented overview represents only a glimpse at the Romanian MPs activity during the Great War. It covers only the main topics of their speeches with-

in a limited number of short timeframes. It does not and it cannot replace a much needed anthology of their speeches and the additional in-depth analyses, but hopefully it will highlight the need of such a collection, in order to continue and complete Teodor V. Păcățianu's works with the parliamentary activity of the Romanians in the Parliament of Hungary between 1910-1918.

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BRIDGING THE GAP: ROMANIAN PARLIAMENTARY ELITE IN AID OF THEIR COMMUNITIES DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR



OVIDIU EMIL IUDEAN

Abstract

The breakout of the war in the summer of 1914 and its rapid evolution into a world conflagration had a profound impact on the Transylvanian society, affecting both those who were on the front lines and the individuals they had left at home.

Transylvanian society saw itself on the one hand direly missing the support given by the male population that had left for the front lines and on the other hand, was confronted with manifold problems caused by war times. One way of solving these matters was to appeal for support to the Transylvanian political leaders with influential positions in the central environments in Budapest. The present case study will focus on precisely one of these connected individuals and the way they lent and intermediated support, taking as an example the correspondence of the Romanian parliamentary representative Ion Ciocan, between January and July 1915.

Keywords

First World War, Transylvania, Bistrița-Năsăud County, “interventions”, Romanian governmental representatives.

DURING THE entire dualist period (1867-1918) from the ranks of the Romanian nation in Hungary a series of political figures distinguished themselves and assumed leading roles in the process of the affirmation of national goals. These figures stemmed from both religious milieus (Greek-Catholic and Orthodox) and lay environments. The most significant of the latter were active as deputies in the Budapest Parliament¹. Extending beyond the political sphere, their activity requires a re-evaluation that takes into account their involvement in the social, cultural, educational and ecclesiastical lives of their co-nationals.

The activities of the Romanian governmental representatives in the Hungarian Parliament – between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century – were characterized by various specific approaches to national issues. One of the characteristic practices of this elite category was their involvement in the process of “interventions”. During our research, we have often encountered the remark that the Romanian governmental representatives had “intervened” with various specific Hungarian authorities in order to resolve the issues signalled by their co-nationals².

These “interventions” were the result of requests addressed by various persons, groups, or even entire communities to solve certain matters that had proven difficult to settle without outside support. Most often, the requests were formulated by persons in the electoral circle represented by that particular deputy in the Hungarian Parliament. However, the cases wherein the requests came from other circles or counties were by no means few.

Consequently, starting from a case study based on the activity of the parliamentary representative Ion Ciocan during the First World War, we will discuss and analyse the characteristics of the practice of “intervention” during this period of political, social, and economic turbulence.

The main objectives of this paper are twofold: firstly, to offer new information regarding the social and economic difficulties faced by the Romanians in Transylvania during the first years of the war; secondly, to argue that the services rendered by the Romanian governmental representatives in aid of their co-

1. Ovidiu Emil Iudean, Alexandru Onojescu, “Politics, Nationalism, and Parliamentarianism. Romanian Representatives in the Budapest Parliament (1861-1918),” *Transylvanian Review* 4 (2013): 3-16; Vlad Popovici, Ovidiu Emil Iudean, “The Elective Representation of the Romanians in the Hungarian Parliament,” *Studia Universitatis Petru Maior. Seria Historia* 11 (2011): 121-146.
2. Many examples of this practice are mentioned in biographies, memoirs and other similar sources. Some notable examples include: that of the deputy George Szerb discussed in Ion I. Lapedatu, *Memorii și amintiri*, ed. Ioan Opriș (Iași: Institutul European, 1998), 61-62; that of the deputy Iosif Gall discussed by Teodor V. Păcățian, *Un mecenat român: Dr. Iosif Gall*, ed. Ovidiu Emil Iudean (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 103 as well as by Aurel Cosma, *Memorii*, ed. Carmen Albert (Timișoara: Editura Mirton, 2010), 67-68; that of the deputy Geza Duca of Cadar presented in Valeriu Braniște, *Amintiri din închisoare*, ed. Alexandru Porțeanu (București: Editura Minerva, 1972), 454-456.

nationals during the difficult wartimes were characteristic of this elite group's approaches to the development of their nation in Hungary. Their activity in this sense during the war years highlighted their special position among the Romanian politicians in Transylvania, as the informally sanctioned mediators between the central or even local Hungarian authorities and the Romanian population to the latter's benefit.

The main sources we have relied on were the over 100 letters of intervention addressed to the representative Ion Ciocan between January and July 1915. The county of Bistrița-Năsăud (which had elected Ciocan to his office, and from which the majority of the intervention requests stem) was faced with many socio-economic difficulties at that time, under the influence of the wider scale political and military events in the region.

Ion Ciocan was one of the most influential political figures who had risen from the ranks of the Romanian nation in Hungary during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. He was born in Mocod, in the Border Guard District of Năsăud, and went on to study theology and philology in Vienna, Graz, and Budapest. He was a professor at the Năsăud Gymnasium, and later on became its Headmaster. In 1898, he was appointed professor at the department for the study of the Romanian language and literature at the University of Budapest, where he taught until 1908 when he requested retirement. He also served as the president of the Năsăud Border Guard Funds, and was elected to the office of parliamentary representative in the Budapest Parliament for the first time in 1896. He would hold this office – with a brief interruption between 1901 and 1903 – until 1915. He passed away on the 6th of September 1915³.

In order to contextualize the phenomenon of “interventions” and Ciocan's activity, it should be noted that the military operations in Eastern Europe during the first half of 1915 were characterized by a continuous ebb and flow of the frontlines as a consequence of the victories won by either the Tsarist armies or the Austrian-Hungarian and German allies. Although there was no direct fight in the county of Bistrița-Năsăud – the closest battles were waged in Bucovina –, the effects of the military conflict were still heavily felt. These included for instance the transit of the Austrian-Hungarian troops, the requisition of foodstuffs and goods, the permanent state of uncertainty at the thought of the approaching Tsarist armies, as well as the mobilization of a great part of the male population in the region⁴.

3. Gavrilă Tomi, “Ion Ciocan. La 90 de ani de la trecerea sa în neființă,” *Arhiva Someșană* 4 (2005): 285-291; Keszé Katalin, *Kultúra és filológia a román Tanszék történetének tükrében* (Budapest: Ed. Kiadja az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Levéltára, 1999), 78.
4. Zorin Zamfir, Jean Banciu, *Primul Război Mondial* (București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1995), 107-110; József Galántai, *Hungary in the First World War* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1989), 94-95; Mihai-Ștefan Ceașu, “Bucovina, obiect al disputelor militare și politice (1914-1918),” in *Primul Război Mondial. Perspectivă istorică și istoriografică*, ed. I. Bolovan et. al.

Through a close reading of the letters of intervention, we have been able to divide them into three major thematic categories, on the basis of the type of support requested by their senders, and to corroborate the information thus extracted into a glimpse of the situation in the Năsăud area in the first half of 1915. The categories are the following: letters concerning military service; letters concerning personal issues other than military service; letters referring to matters of general interest to the community.

The first category includes approximately 55% of the letters analysed. These focus on either the exemption from serving in the military or the conducting of this service in institutions far removed from the front lines, and thus ensuring a greater degree of safety.

The most often invoked reasons for this were: the high age of the person in question, nearing the upper limit of the acceptable age for military service, the individual's precarious state of health, or the crucial position he occupied in the community.

For instance, in April 1915, Ion Ciocan received a letter from Năsăud regarding the case of Virgil P. The person in cause had benefitted from a provision of the Hungarian legislation that allowed all those who had enrolled in military service before the age of 19 to complete their service in the year when they would reach the age of 47. As Virgil P. had just reached this age, he asked the representative to intervene with the Honved Commander to resolve the matter so that he could be spared mobilization. Moreover, he added a series of details from his medical history: "the heavy liver and gallbladder sickness that I will have to carry throughout my entire life, and that requires me to have constant new care and a very well-regulated way of life". This was meant to further justify his incapacity to accomplish military tasks should he be mobilized⁵.

The lawyer Petru Poruțiu from Bistrița was in a similar situation, and wrote to his local representative to intervene with the same ministry because he had "been ascertained, and must join the militia on the 15th of February. I am to go to the Honved regiment in Timișoara. However, because I suffer from an older sickness of the heart and from rheumatism in the hands and feet, and after a longer or briefer trial I will have to be dispensed anyway, I thought it best to ask that I be sent to a court or a military prosecutor's office, where I would gladly serve during the war"⁶.

(Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română. Centrul de Studii Transilvane/Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2015), 289-290.

5. The County Service of the National Archives Bistrița-Năsăud (hereafter abbreviated as SJANBN), archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Virgil P to I. Ciocan, April 25th 1915, f. 21-22. Currently, the archival fund *Ion Ciocan* is undergoing a process of re-organisation begun in 2013. It is possible that some of the references to archival documents will no longer be accurate. In order to avoid future confusion, we have given the name of the letter senders as well as the date of the letters in full in the following footnotes.
6. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Petru Poruțiu to I. Ciocan, February 16th 1915, f. 17, 20.

Several other letters concerning similar issues reached Ciocan from Prundul-Bârgăului (in the case of Ioan Becheș), from Tășnad (Vasile Oros), from Brașov (Dumitru Lupan), or from Dej (concerning Octavian Moldovan and Ioan Țilea). All of these individuals played key roles in their communities, and it was therefore in the best interest of these communities for them to remain in their stations. The first – Ioan Becheș – ran a commercial enterprise in the locality of Prundul-Bârgău and, as a result of his mobilization “the enterprise as such, and most significantly, the population in the Bârgău Valley, who purchased various necessary items from the abovementioned enterprise would have to suffer”⁷.

Vasile Oros was the executive director of the “Vulturul” Romanian bank in Tășnad. As a result of his mobilisation as a Honved lieutenant, the abovementioned “institute [remained] for such a long period without a manager, that its existence and through it, the livelihoods of thousands of families are endangered”⁸.

Dumitru Lupan was a professor of natural sciences at the Brașov Gymnasium. He wrote to Ciocan in order to obtain a dispensation from military service, motivating his request by stating that he was “the only professor specialized in natural sciences, not only at the Gymnasium, but also at the real school”⁹.

Octavian Moldovan was an accountant at the “Someșana” bank in Dej, and was the sole clerk trained in this field who had not been mobilized. Should he have been mobilized, the institution would have had to be closed down. Part of the motivation advanced for obtaining dispensation should be noted: “From the Hungarian and Jewish banks in the Solnoc-Dăbâca County all of the clerks who requested it obtained dispensations, but from among the Romanians, no one was granted it”¹⁰.

The last of the previously mentioned individuals, Ioan Țilea, was a secretary at the “Someșana” bank, and was one of the few specialized clerks available at the time in the region. He was for instance needed for “dividing up and dispatching the 500 train cars of corn received from Romania that arrive periodically”, and was described as “an expert in this business and therefore indispensable”¹¹.

The second category containing letters referring to personal matters apart from dispensation from military service is somewhat lower, amounting to only 25% of the total number of letters received. Nonetheless, these documents provide a

7. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Ioan Becheș to I. Ciocan, date unreadable, f. 101-102.

8. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Vasile Oros to I. Ciocan, March 24th 1915, f. 294-295.

9. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Dumitru Lupan to I. Ciocan, June 8th 1915, f. 252-253.

10. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Ioan Moldovan to I. Ciocan, March 3rd 1915, f. 267-268.

11. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Eleftera Mihali to I. Ciocan, April 10th 1915, f. 279-280.

series of interesting information regarding the way in which the war and the vicinity of the frontlines left their mark on the liberal professions and the entrepreneurial endeavours of the Romanians in Hungary.

For instance, the letter sent by the lawyer Alexa David from Năsăud, dated 7th March 1915, offers a glimpse into the effects of the war on his practice. He recounts the following: “Ever since the war had begun in the summer of the previous year, the business in my practice has been drastically reduced and I started to make an inventory [...] I cannot predict the situation after the war, but I think that only through strenuous work would I be able to evaluate and collect what is owed to me”. His income as a result of his activity had thus taken a cut as a consequence of the war. The solution he found as well as the calculations he made reflect the mutations occasioned by the war on the mind-set of the members of the liberal professions who, uncertain about the evolution of their businesses and practices, frequently sought out state-funded employment. “I have thus reached the conviction that by occupying the office of judge in Năsăud I would more easily be able to attain my goal and would also be ensured for the future. In the courthouse I would only have to work 6 hours, while I am almost 9 hours a day in my practice.” He thus asked Ion Ciocan to intervene with the required authorities so as to make his professional transition easier¹².

The situation of the beer factory in the property of the Marțian brothers offers yet another glimpse into the material shortcomings caused by the war. Although the factory had collaborated well with the authorities in charge of furthering military interests in 1914, during the next year, the situation changed drastically. The factory was on the verge of being closed down because of the lack of raw material needed to produce beer. Marțian argued in favour of his request thusly:

Generally, our situation could be taken into consideration by the high forums, seeing that we are at the border of the country, near the battlefields, where we have been threatened by an enemy incursion and could not take the chance to acquire the necessary quantities without encountering a risk that exceeds our powers.

In the current situation we are in danger of completely closing down, as we do not have the goods that are requested of us and thus we will lose our current customers and will not be able to win them back.

On the other hand, we are required to provide greater quantities in Maramureș, where the private train circulation is stagnating, and in Bucovina, where the factories are destroyed. We cannot presently concede to these requests and we wouldn't be able to even if we could produce the malt from the two train cars of barley, as we can only barely satisfy the local demand. However, if we were able to buy malt, our installation being up to the times, we could fulfil all requests. A large

12. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letters from Alexa David to I. Ciocan, March 7th 1915 and April 3rd 1915, f. 136-137, 140.

part of our products are sent away to the army, one of our main consumers, at least when it was stationed nearer to us¹³.

While the previous examples referred to “interventions” made to support inhabitants of the county of Năsăud, the following involves the request made by Ștefan Cicio Pop, a deputy of the National Romanian Party, on behalf of the Romanian craftsmen in Zarand, from the county of Arad. This group had “made an offer to the Honved commander to deliver boots and other footwear”, but as they had not received an answer they asked for Ciocan’s intervention in this matter. Should he involve himself in this issue, the Năsăud representative would “do a great service to the small Romanian craftsmen”, as the writer of the letter stated¹⁴.

We have also included in the same category those letters sent to Ciocan requesting help in obtaining free transit passes (passports) to Romania. Without a doubt, one of the most remarkable instances in this category was the request for a pass sent in by the lawyer Daniel Vasu, on 9th February 1915, on behalf of Aurelia Goga, Octavian Goga’s mother¹⁵.

A highly interesting situation was described in the letter of intervention sent to Ciocan in the matter of the trial against Mărioara David, born Nicula, from Abrud. She stood accused of agitation because of certain statements made in private, but in the presence of two ladies of Hungarian descent from Abrud. In a letter dated 4th July 1915, her husband, the lawyer George David, requested the support of the Năsăud representative in order to resolve his family’s situation. It is worthy of note that the lawyer’s request came as result of the information and suggestions received from the former Romanian national representative, Iuliu Maniu. The latter had notified George David that Ciocan was apprised of the matter and had involved himself on his own accord in the issue.

I write to Your Illustriousness with this matter because Dr. Iuliu Maniu, a former deputy, had shared some days ago that the issue was known to Your Illustriousness, and that You were so kind as to advise the Ministry of Justice Balogh¹⁶ to halt the proceedings against my wife [...] the accusation was based on a false and ill willing insinuation. My wife has never used any expressions from which agitation could be deduced, and the fact that the discussion [...] took place in a private residence, where only they were present, thus lacking the character of

13. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letters from Marțian to I. Ciocan, March 16th 1915 and April 1st 1915, f. 262-263, 266.

14. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Ștefan Cicio Pop to I. Ciocan, February 20th 1915, f. 309.

15. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Daniel Vasu to I. Ciocan, February 9th 1915, f. 59.

16. Balogh Jenő (1864-1953) was a Hungarian politician trained in law, who occupied the position of Ministry of Justice in Hungary between 1913 and 1917.

publicity, the intention to agitate as well as the audience who could be agitated, cannot serve as a basis to the accusation that was raised only for personal vengeance¹⁷.

The final category of letters concerns matters of general interest to the community. We have selected two examples to illustrate the specificities of these requests.

The first of them deals with the lack of foodstuffs and the prohibitively high prices of food still available on the local markets. The professor Teodor Şimon thus wrote to Ion Ciocan from Năsăud on 23rd March 1915, expressing his concern that “the state of the Năsăud inhabitants is as desperate as can be. For almost two months we have not been able to buy from the market even one kilo of cornflower, or grains.” He went on to inform Ciocan that the local authorities “made contact with the Geoagiu (Felgyogy) priest, by name of Şiofron Pop, who managed to buy for us the quantity described in the preture certificate, namely approximately 35 *másza*¹⁸ of wheat, 25 of cornflower, 3 of barley and 3 of beans. – We wanted all to amount to a train car’s worth of foodstuffs. However, until now we only have 60-70 metric *másza*”. Despite the fact that they had contacted the administrative and military forums in charge so as to ensure the optimal transport of the necessary food, “some days ago the praetor from Teiuş notified us that the requisition committee also included our foodstuffs in their take, so now we find ourselves without money and without food. The foodstuffs were bought at the Teiuş market, at market price. Free prices.” This narrative is then followed by the request to intervene with the authorities to release the purchased goods as “for the state, this quantity is inconsequential, while for the population in Năsăud and for the mass of students it means a great deal. The Holy Passover is also coming and we cannot obtain even one kg of wheat flower. It is an insufferable situation”. The writer also mentioned that the inhabitants of the county aimed to purchase foodstuffs from Romania, which they then wanted to ship safely, again asking the deputy to “grant for our consumption the permission to ship through Bucovina two train cars of wheat flour and five train cars of cornflower, bought from Romania, and transported from Kimpulung to Iacobenii and then through Kirlibaba. We have not yet purchased these commodities, but should we receive the permission to transport them, we will buy them”¹⁹.

The second situation deals with the request made by the Gymnasium Headmaster Ion Gheţie “regarding the early release of pupils from school for economic interests”. This measure was motivated on the one hand by the opportu-

17. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from George David to I. Ciocan, July 4th 1915, f. 130-131.

18. One *másza* - a weight unit used in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire - was the equivalent of 100 kg.

19. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Teodor Şimon to I. Ciocan, March 23rd 1915, f. 24-25.

nity for “the students to be of help on the fields at home, which would also be of great aid to the state in the present conditions”, especially as “there is a great lack of strong arms in the economy”. On another hand, this measure would help the “boys who to a great degree [...] have no food and are starving”. The gymnasium pupils – many of them housed by families in Năsăud – were in dire straits because “the prices here are very high and only with great difficulty can we obtain 3-5 kilograms of flour at the price of 65 crucers²⁰ per kg”. The gymnasium headmaster thankfully received the minister’s permission to grant the pupils an early holiday, so that on the 22nd of May 1915, Ioan Gheție was able to notify Ion Ciocan that “we have finally sent the children home”²¹.

Some of the letters in this category also contain information on the situation in the county, supplied by Ciocan’s acquaintances in Năsăud. One often-occurring theme is the distress at the thought of the Russian troops, who were approaching the Carpathian passes connecting Bucovina to Transylvania. This was added to the presence of a great number of troops and military equipment. Thus, material hardships, such as the lack of food products caused by the prioritization of consumption to the army and the rise in prices, were compounded by the difficulties in circulation on the main roads and railways in the county. Ciocan received various pieces of news regarding the matter, as for instance the following:

“Around here there is much movement. A week earlier a multitude of carts transporting militia from Bucovina arrived, and they are now spread out until Beclean. We are also awaiting various kinds of troops, everything is getting increasingly expensive, and we can tell that we will also have to taste more of the war’s bitterness”²². Another letter stated that “For about 18 days already the military plan has been implemented on our railway and one cannot really travel. This time they did not bring the militia around, only ammunition. From today onwards the trains are again running normally so we can travel somewhat more easily. We will perhaps be able to acquire the necessities of life – especially flour – as nowadays you can’t get [anything] in the local shop”²³. Other letter writers expressed their concern about the approaching Russian troops: “Although we are now relatively well, we are distressed by the news arriving from Bucovina, that the Russians are approaching us again. It is said, that they have again reached Cernăuți”²⁴. One

20. From the German *Kreuzer*, a currency used in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. 100 kreuzers = 1 florin.

21. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letters from Ioan Gheție to I. Ciocan, February 16th 1915, April 9th 1915, April 12th 1915, May 22nd 1915, f. 181, 185, 191-192, 198-199.

22. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Alexa David to I. Ciocan, June 1st 1915, f. 158.

23. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Ioan Gheție to I. Ciocan, March 10th 1915, f. 196.

24. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Ioan Gheție to I. Ciocan, May 22nd 1915, f. 191.

of the letters written by Ioan Gheție, the principle of the Năsăud gymnasium, perfectly captures the mood in the region: “We have by now almost got used to the wider world events, no news surprises us, the only things we are preoccupied with are day-to-day troubles”²⁵.

Beyond the glimpses offered into the situation behind the frontlines in the county of Năsăud, the letters also convey significant information regarding the practice of “intervening” during the war.

The first thing that should be noted is that Ion Ciocan did not exclusively receive letters from individuals in the electoral circle wherein he had been elected. Many of these requests – approximately 40% - came from persons living the counties of Solnoc-Dăbâca, Sătmar, Sălaj, Mureș-Turda, Arad, Sibiu, or Brașov.

The fact that these individuals appealed to Ion Ciocan can be motivated in two ways: either they could not appeal to a Romanian representative from their respective counties, as such a figure did not exist; or, did such a figure exist, they were not powerful enough to pull the strings in Budapest that would resolve the matter at home.

As an argument in support of the latter reason we can advance the letters sent by leading members of the National Romanian Party, who were themselves representatives in the Budapest Parliament – Teodor Mihali and Ștefan Cicio Pop. The former wrote to Ciocan on several occasions on behalf of his relatives and acquaintances, while the latter intervened for the craftsmen in Zarand. The letter that Ciocan received on behalf of Octavian Goga’s mother –whose son had already, by the early twentieth century, established himself as one of the leaders of the new generation of Romanian politicians – as well as the one sent by the lawyer George David from Abrud at the behest of Iuliu Maniu attest to this fact. The frequent appeals to Ciocan suggest that the reach of the influence of the Romanian governmental representatives was very broad, although they had frequently been accused of too extensive compromises by the Romanian public opinion. The breadth and use of this political capital most definitely contributed to the mitigation of the negative effects of the First World War on the difficult situation of the Romanians in Hungary. The letters received from other political figures also attest to the frequent collaboration among the Romanian representatives, who, despite their political differences, strove towards the same goal: to defend the interests of their co-nationals.

Beyond the “interventions” required by the persons dealing with the issues themselves, the practice of mediating “intervention” requests should also be noted.

The first type of mediation was more or less singular, occurring when for instance one individual wrote on behalf of one or two acquaintances or relatives. The writer was in this case well-known to the deputy or came from the local

25. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Ioan Gheție to I. Ciocan, April 9th 1915, f. 199.

intelligentsia – was a priest, teacher, clerk, etc., thus already occupying some kind of middle ground between the local population and the authorities. The second category of mediators reflects the specificities of the system of political and social relations at the level of the Romanian intelligentsia in Transylvania. Several figures established themselves as brokers between those represented – the inhabitants of the electoral circle of Năsăud – and their elected representative in the Budapest Parliament. These brokerage ties may also be seen to function on an ethnic or national level, between the Romanians in Hungary and their co-national charged with defending their interests in the country's supreme legislative forum. Two such brokers, who mediated the majority of intervention requests, were the lawyer Alexa David, Ion Ciocan's nephew, and Ioan Gheție, the Headmaster of the Romanian gymnasium in Năsăud. The fact that the two were most often chosen to write to Ciocan by third parties attested to their privileged positions in the deputy's social sphere of connections. Moreover, after the deputy's death, Alexa David would be named as the heir to his fortune, while Ioan Gheție would continue in his political footsteps, serving as an elected representative in the Parliament between 1915 and 1918.

The geographical reach of these two brokers extended outside the borders of the county of Năsăud. Alexa David held a particularly privileged position, at the apex of a hierarchy of ties leading to Ion Ciocan, a network that had been established during the lawyer's studies. The requests stemming from outside Năsăud that were intermediated by Ioan Gheție²⁶ generally came from his circle of kin. A third broker appears in this context, mediating for external requests, namely Teodor Mihali²⁷, one of the leading political figures of the National Romanian Party, and himself a member of the Budapest Parliament. The tie of friendship and cooperation between the two Romanian politicians was also expressed in the "interventions" requested by Mihali from his more influential colleague in Parliament. Teodor Mihali brokered a series of "interventions" on behalf of relatives and close acquaintances – especially those hailing from the county of Solnoc-Dăbâca – and in doing so, fulfilled his own political debts as an elected representative in Parliament by appealing to his friend, Ciocan.

As far as the gender distribution of the letter writers and petitioners is concerned, the great majority of these were male. We have only identified two cases wherein the persons for whom the representative needed to intervene were women: the case of Aurelia Goga and that of Mărioara David. Only two women wrote to

26. Ioan Gheție (1862-1921) was a Romanian professor and politician, who succeeded Ion Ciocan both in his office as headmaster of the Năsăud Gymnasium, and in his office as representative of the Năsăud County between 1915 and 1918.

27. Teodor Mihali (1855-1934) was a Romanian politician trained in law, who held three consecutive mandates of parliamentary representative of the electoral circle of Ileanda Mare, in the Solnoc-Dăbâca County, between 1905 and 1918.

Ciocan directly in order to request an intervention, namely Eleftera Mihali – Teodor Mihali's wife – and Tincuța Runcan, who also benefitted from the brokerage of Alexa David. Tincuța Runcan's main reason for writing was to improve her husband's situation in the military. He was stationed in Galicia on the frontline, and wanted to be re-stationed somewhere further away from direct combat, where he would have been safe²⁸.

The great majority of those for whom "interventions" were required were Romanians, but this is also influenced by the fact that our analysis exclusively focused on the letters drafted in Romanian. However, we also encounter cases such as the letter written on behalf of the Jewish student of medicine Engelberg, who hailed from the county of Năsăud²⁹. Moreover, a series of letters of intervention drafted in Hungarian also exist in the same collection, thus attesting to the fact that Ciocan's activity was not exclusively geared towards solving the matters of Romanians. As an elected representative from the electoral circle of Năsăud, Ion Ciocan upheld the interests of his voters and demonstrated deep knowledge of the political-electoral realities of the time.

Although one might argue that these "interventions" were no more than singular, individual cases, only visible because of the particular political and military situation in the region, other sources from the time – such as memoirs or diaries – attest to their representativity. The beginning of the letter written by Emil Borcia from Sibiu succinctly and eloquently conveyed the manner in which intervention was seen by those who requested it: "Illustrious gentleman, having heard from many directions about your kindness of heart, that leads you to support each and every Romanian as should be and in each matter, please allow me to also ask of you..."³⁰. The Romanian governmental representative Ion Ciocan, the focus of and channel through which all of these requests reached the authorities and were to the best ability resolved, embodied the characteristics of the modern parliamentarian. He showed not only a deep understanding of his role as a political leader of the Romanians in Hungary, but also an awareness of his position as elected representative in Parliament, a position that brought with it not only influence and benefits, but also a series of essential responsibilities and debts to those who relied on him for help in critical times.

Certainly, a greater number of sources attesting to the practice of "interventions" will need to be located in the future, in order to be able to better assess the effects of the activities of the Romanian governmental representatives on

28. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letters from Tincuța Runcan to I. Ciocan, March 7th 1915 and March 28th 1915, 161-162, 303-304.

29. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Ioan Gheție to I. Ciocan, February 16th 1915, f. 181.

30. SJANBN, archival fund *Ion Ciocan*, folder 96, Letter from Emil Borcia to I. Ciocan, April 22nd 1915, f. 107.

the national development of the Romanians in Hungary. This issue is however compounded by the lack of personal archival funds dedicated to these political figures – Ion Ciocan’s case is a fortunate exception – which necessarily directs the research towards other types of sources (memoirs, journals, contemporary press and secondary literature).

Finally, seen from an electoral perspective, it is doubtless that these “interventions” attracted a significant electoral capital, especially in those cases where in the favour was requested by or on behalf of a person who was entitled to vote in the deputy’s circumscription. This capital was all the more important when the “interventions” were in aid of entire communities. The governmental representatives’ ability to attract such capital was one of the reasons for which these “interventions” were favourably regarded by the authorities. We may thus posit a three-tiered mechanism, comprising the voter body, the representative, and the central authorities in Budapest, three elements that were interdependent. The voters asked for the support of their parliamentary representative in order to solve certain matters that exceeded their possibilities. Depending on the way in which the issues were resolved, the voters would choose whether to support the representative in the next parliamentary elections. In turn, the representative indebted himself to the central authorities and thus needed to act in accordance with the government’s interests during the parliamentary debates. The practice of “interventions” can thus be directly linked to the “limitation of the parliamentary representatives’ independence” in relation to the Hungarian government – at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century – theorized by the Hungarian historian András Gerő.³¹

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31. András Gerő, *The Hungarian Parliament (1867-1918). A Mirage of Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 135-137.

SEQUENCES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR IN THE PRESS

Transylvanian Romanians between Ethnicity and Politics before The Great Union



MIHAELA MEHEDINȚI-BEIEAN

Abstract

World War I completely reshaped the European continent. For Romanians it represented a long-awaited chance to unite within the borders of a single state on the basis of national principles. Transylvanian periodicals played a crucial role in this process as they prepared the public opinion for the conflagration's end result, namely Greater Romania. They did this mainly by providing Transylvanians with information about their compatriots, as well as by perpetuating a positive image of the Romanian royal family both before the conflict began and during its unfolding. Throughout the war, the activity of the press with regard to the idea of national unity was guided by three key moments that staged the Great Union: October 1914 – King Ferdinand I's accession to the throne, August 1916 – Romania's entry into the war and December 1918 – the realisation of the “national ideal”.

Keywords

World War I, Transylvania, Greater Romania, ethnic and national identity, Romanian periodicals

THE FIRST World War questioned almost all of the pre-existing establishments: empires and their governments, older territorial claims and the ethnicity-related legislation that was in force. Romanians inhabiting Transylvania and Romania found themselves in the midst of the events, as their geographical location coincided with the borders of three very large empires: Austro-Hungary, Turkey and Russia.

As part of the Dual Monarchy, Transylvanian Romanians were loyal to the Habsburg dynasty at the beginning of the conflict. However, after Romania entered into the war as part of the opposing alliance in August 1916, they were caught between Scylla and Charybdis. Unfortunately, the press could not accurately illustrate this situation due to a double censorship, because alongside the “normal” censorship that was in force within the Habsburgs’ Monarchy the war brought about another type of censorship which made sure that the general public did not have access to information that could harm the military operations¹.

Across the Carpathian Mountains, Romanians inhabiting the Old Kingdom were acutely aware of the unfortunate situation of their compatriots from Transylvania, who did not possess political rights in spite of the fact that they represented the numerical majority in the province². But King Carol I and, after his death, King Ferdinand I were also cognizant of the fact that Transylvania was not the only neighbouring region which was inhabited by Romanians, Bessarabians also leading a deplorable life under Russian rule³. Thus, the decision to enter into the war and especially the choice between allies and enemies were particularly difficult steps for Romania⁴. Obviously, now the actions undertaken and their results are well-known, but the possible scenarios are multiple, variegated and could have had extremely diverse outcomes⁵.

1. In fact, journalists knew that their work could have negative effects for their own armies and thus accepted this war-related censorship rather easily and explained to their readers that they had to do so because “The press cannot have enough caution when receiving information and it does not have to forget, in such moments, one thing: that it has to always know more than it says and that not everything it knows is of the so large, but also so perilous competence of the anonymous public towards which it is directed”; *Drapelul. Organ național-politic* (hereinafter: *Drapelul*) XVI, 33 (1916): 3.
2. Glenn E. Torrey mentions Bucharest’s “anger over the plight of the larger Romanian minority ‘languishing under the Magyar yoke’ in Transylvania”; Glenn E. Torrey, *Romania and World War I. A collection of studies* (Jassy, Oxford, Portland: The Center for Romanian Studies, 1998), 10.
3. Transylvanian journalists also remarked and informed the public about the dire situation of Bessarabians with regard to their rights within the Russian Empire. For example, see the article “Pe Nistru în sus” by N. Dunăreanu, in *Cosînzeana. Revistă ilustrată săptămânală* (hereinafter: *Cosînzeana*) IV, 40 (1914): 563-566.
4. For an excellent presentation of this general context see Torrey, *Romania and World War I*.
5. See Lucian Boia’s essay on this topic entitled *Primul Război Mondial. Controverse, paradoxuri, reinterpretări* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2014).

However, the aim of this study is not to discuss potential results, but to put to good use the historical information provided by the Romanian press from Transylvania during the conflagration's unfolding. Consequently, while bringing to the fore the names of a few less-researched periodicals, the following pages will emphasise the three key moments of the war from the Romanians' perspective, the main goal of this research being that of illustrating the manner in which the press contributed to the creation of a mental framework compatible with Greater Romania.

The role of the Romanian press from Transylvania in preparing the Great Union

RELATIONS BETWEEN Transylvanian Romanians and their compatriots from the Old Kingdom have always been close, in spite of the political boundaries between them. With regard to the First World War, the evolution of these connections registered three key moments: (1) October 1914 – the death of King Carol I and the accession to the throne of King Ferdinand I and Queen Marie, (2) August 1916 – Romania's entry into the war and (3) December 1918 – the National Assembly of Alba Iulia that decided Transylvania's union with Romania.

1914-1916

These three events affected the contents of the Romanian press from Transylvania, although the extent of this influence was limited by the concrete circumstances within which the publications were allowed to exist and function. By this, I am referring to the censorship system in use in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a system that was now doubled by the requirements of the ongoing conflict⁶. Consequently, as in the other countries involved in the conflagration, Romanian journalists needed to choose their words carefully and approach subjects that were comfortable to the authorities or at least present them in the sanctioned manner.

Within this context, news regarding Romanians from across the Carpathian Mountains represented a sensitive topic and had to be treated accordingly. Nevertheless, it seems that at least until the turning point of August 1916, the Hungarian administration had nothing to fear: Romanians' loyalty towards the

6. More details in Carmen Țăgșorean, "The Romanian Position during the Neutrality Years of WWI in the Transylvanian Press", in *Primul Război Mondial. Perspectivă istorică și istoriografică / World War I. A Historical and Historiographical Perspective*, eds. Ioan Bolovan, Gheorghe Cojocaru, Oana Mihaela Tămaș (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română. Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2015), 118, and Ioana Elena Ignat, *Mobilizare și participare în Transilvania în Primul Război Mondial: Perspective socio-economice și demografice*, Ph.D. Thesis (Cluj-Napoca, Babeș-Bolyai University, 2013), 178-191.

Habsburgs' Monarchy was strong and prevailed over any national sympathies. Numerous press articles support this idea, the need to stand by the Emperor's decision and to contribute to the war effort with all that was necessary being constantly and explicitly stated by Romanian journalists⁷. Even periodicals with a religious profile endorsed this stance, considering that the Emperor was forced to go to war in order to achieve peace⁸. Moreover, Romanians who distinguished themselves through patriotic acts were publicly congratulated and given as examples to their compatriots⁹, while sometimes entire communities or groups deserved such praise, because "The Romanian people from this country, as well as from other lands of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, not only gives the precious tribute of warm blood on the battlefields from all parts¹⁰, but concurrently displays remarkable proofs of humane and Christian charity"¹¹.

However, national mobilisation in the press could take on many forms and thus sometimes it was more subtle. For instance, an article addressed to students emphasised the virtues of the flag as a symbol of one's life experiences and not necessarily of a particular political entity. Within this context, the flag represents "the home where you were born, the patch of land where you grow, the first smile of a child, the young man's first love, the mother who cradles us, the father who admonishes us, the first friend, the first tear, hopes, dreams, illusions, memories: all these are joys, all enclosed in a single word, in a name, the most beautiful of all: *motherland*. – Yes, I tell you, the flag is all this [...], it is the

7. One such example is that of the war loans the Dual Monarchy resorted to throughout the conflict, because the publication of the announcements launched by the government were usually accompanied by hearty advice to contribute, as proven by *Cultura creștină* VI, 9 (1916): 257-259 and *Drapelul* XVI, 39 (1916): 1, 49; 2, 133; 2. However, after the war ended, journalists affirmed that Romanians' participation in Hungary's eight internal loans that took place during the conflagration was due partly to their hoped-for profitability and partly to "the orders of the gentlemen from the administration". Moreover, a nuance in the terms used is also noticeable, because the phrase "war loan" was replaced with "national loan" in the case of Greater Romania's appeal to its citizens for money needed for the country's organisation after the war; see *Cultura creștină* VIII, 3-4 (1919): 81, *Drapelul* XIX, 22 (1919): 2 and *Gazeta Poporului*. *Foaie politico-culturală* (hereinafter: *Gazeta Poporului*) II, 49 (1919): 2-3. Naturally, it might be argued that this change of terms could have been caused by the mere end of the conflict, but I believe that the word "national" was deemed to stimulate responsiveness to this request.

8. *Cultura creștină* IV, 13-14 (1914): 404-409.

9. Such lists abound in the period's press.

10. The names of those who had fought courageously and had received decorations were usually made public by the press. Homage was also paid to the "heroes", those who had died on the front, especially in the case of officers. Sometimes entire Romanian regiments were praised by the General Headquarters, as, for example Regiment no. 43 from Caransebeș; for details, see *Drapelul* XVI, 54 (1916): 2.

11. *Cosânzeana* V, 4 (1915): 30. The article I quoted from has in view the activity of Dr. Vasile Hâncu and of the women from Blaj who had set up the first Romanian permanent hospital from the Dual Monarchy.

harshest and the proudest duty represented by what is and what can be greater, an idea that flutters in a flag"¹².

The same national enthusiasm that should characterise the young, at least according to the editors of *Noi* magazine, was expressed with regard to other two notions: motherland (*patria*) and people (*neamul*)¹³. Fortunately, "This sublime word [i.e. motherland] is today fully understood by our colleagues from the [Romanian] Kingdom. In order to preserve, strengthen and enhance its sparkling glory they have united and work according to a schedule". Moreover, 'people' "Is no longer a vague notion for them [that is, for the students from Romania], but it is a unitary being". The editors thus welcomed the "strong and healthy current that has magically ventilated somnolence from their souls. Today our brothers from the Kingdom, once awakened by the warm soul sent as a deputation from Transylvania, mobilise with firmness their borrowed and hugely multiplied force".

It should be remarked that the above-quoted statements were published before the world conflagration began and consequently illustrate just how ripe for conflict the atmosphere of the pre-war period really was. However, this bellicose attitude was to be doubled by a national motivation for action, as demonstrated by an article written by "our distinguished politician" Vintilă I. Brătianu in 1915, before Romania's entry into the war. Suggestively entitled "Patriotism during peacetime", this article was meant to mobilise the Romanians' energies not only in the event of war, but also in the period preceding it. Although at the time the province's political context was completely different from that of Romania and the Transylvanian Romanians were already deeply involved in the conflagration, *Gazeta Transilvaniei* deemed it suitable to advertise the fact that

The fruits of patriotism during peacetime prepare the country for the dark day.

[...] Patriotism's mission is not to remain a simple expression of a sentiment, but to *serve the country's needs*. Due to it, the State or the people have to find *advancement* during peacetime, and a *powerful defence shield* during times of danger.

Its practical purpose is then *the augmentation of the national energy*, material and moral. The soundest fruits of an enlightened patriotism are embodied in this augmentation of the national energy. [...]

The enlightened patriot, during peacetime, will work of course in order to ensure good finances for the state, to endow the army, but his love for the country will drive him to work particularly for the people's material and

12. *Noi. Organul Studențimii Române. Revistă Social-Culturală Ilustrată* (hereinafter *Noi*) I, 8-9 (1914): 117, original emphasis.

13. *Noi* I, 11 (1914) 150.

cultural edification, for the development of its national and civil consciousness¹⁴.

It is possible that this article was received so well in Transylvania due to a passage in which Brătianu affirmed that “When a people that has been subdued had the luck that part of it could live *through its own means*¹⁵, the augmentation of the energy of the *entire* people depends upon the augmentation of the energy of this [free] state and of its people”. This transparent depiction of the situation of the Transylvanian Romanians in comparison to those inhabiting the Old Kingdom and of the hoped-for relations between them probably represented music to Transylvanian ears. This promise that the peace period was used by Romania for the benefit of all Romanians, even those subdued by other nations, surely brought hope to many Transylvanians, some of which had perhaps already lost their dear ones on the front.

The general belief was that Transylvanian Romanians’ effort had to be rewarded¹⁶, especially because “The army today is not a mercenary one, but the national army of the peoples. Everyone, young and old, all who are able to carry a weapon are soldiers today. Not professional military men, but citizens who have left their plough, workshop and office in order to run and face the enemy. It is the very people that stands under arms”¹⁷. Moreover, they were worthy of being recompensed not only because “Our Romanians fight like lions”¹⁸, but also because

This people has forgotten all the internal shortcomings that it had to bear in order to direct its entire forces only and solely towards withstanding the menace at the borders and the consequences of that menace. Thus, all of a sudden, on all terrains, a febrile activity both for helping the country to sustain the war and for alleviating the sufferings left by this war has started.

On the frontline we are represented in a dignified and honest manner. Both in numbers and as morale. Almost 400,000 Romanian lads are fighting¹⁹ [...].

The measure in which the poor, but honest Romanian peasants have contributed with their money to bear the immense war expenses again places us in an unequalled brighter light in comparison to other peoples²⁰.

14. *Gazeta Transilvaniei*. Ziar politic național (hereinafter: *Gazeta Transilvaniei*) LXXVIII, 10 (1915): 1, original emphases.

15. “Prin el însuși”.

16. As one journalist put it: “This war has to be decisive for our fate as well. So many sacrifices cannot be made in vain”; *Drapelul* XVI, 54 (1916): 2.

17. *Drapelul* XVI, 4 (1916): 2.

18. This is the title of an article that had appeared in „N. W. Journal” and was reprinted by *Drapelul* XVI, 86 (1916): 2.

19. According to the results of the survey conducted immediately after the war under the aegis of ASTRA, there were 489 544 Transylvanian Romanians involved in the war. See Teodor V. Păcățian, “Jertfele românilor din Ardeal, Banat, Crișana, Sătmăr și Maramureș, aduse în războiul mondial din anii 1914-1918”, in *Transilvania* V, 1-2 (1923): 49-50.

20. *Gazeta Transilvaniei* LXXVIII, 16 (1915): 1.

Journalists and arguably the entire public opinion considered that the Romanians' loyalty towards the Monarchy and their value as soldiers²¹ represented the best possible guarantee of a favourable outcome: "Now when the deployment of our ancestral energies has given so many excellent proofs of the national virtues of the Romanian people, more than ever we have to strengthen our beliefs in a future that is better, brighter and worthier of a conscious people. Let's clean up our soul of all the doubts that torment us, [...] let's become aware that we exist and that we desire to exist and that for no price in the world will we allow the cataclysm of the European civilisation [...] to bury us under its ruins"²².

Transylvanians' hopes and wishes were also supported by Romanian politicians, for whom promises to do something in favour of their "brothers" kept under the Hungarian yoke brought about an important political capital back home. Such an example was P. P. Carp, "who has so far unfailingly been uninterested in our fate", but whose visit to Vienna in January 1915 had a "declared political nature". As Transylvanian journalists remarked, Carp "feels that he needs the national question of the Romanians from the Monarchy in order to achieve his programme. He feels and sees that only by providing the public in Romania with guarantees that our condition will substantially improve will he be able to conquer Romania's public opinion"²³.

In a similar vein, in an interview given to an editor of the *Az Est* Hungarian periodical, Al. Marghiloman declared that Romania

"would gladly receive in the bosom of the mother country all those Romanians living within foreign political boundaries. This is Romania's national ideal. On the other hand, I will be the last to cast the veil of oblivion over this grave in which rests, for a hundred years, the most beautiful flower of Stephen the Great's crown: Bessarabia. [...] The longing for the accomplishment of the national ideal can never bereave a country so much so as to shake its grounds entirely. I believe Romania is today in that situation that allows her to turn her gaze towards the east and at the same time to gain serious advantages in the west for its brothers from the same people. It's just that the government cannot make up its mind, but that is why I'm certain that Romania will take that path that the events are designating for her"²⁴.

21. Transylvanians distinguished themselves during the First World War not only due to their bravery, but also because they fought on almost all the fronts where the Austro-Hungarian Empire was involved. Some details in Sever Stoica, "Participarea transilvănenilor la războiul de eliberare", in *Piatră de Hotar* III, 8-9 (1936): 75-79.

22. *Drapelul* XVI, 1 (1916): 2. See also *Gazeta Poporului* I, 6 (1918): 1.

23. *Drapelul* XVI, 8 (1916): 2.

24. *Drapelul* XVI, 41 (1916): 2.

The turning point – August 1916 and its aftermath

Romania's negotiations with the two belligerent camps were followed with interest by the Transylvanian press and reported upon within the limits established by the authorities. News about the neighbouring kingdom's intentions was usually presented according to the lines drawn by the Hungarian official publications and, when some eager editors launched into comments that exceeded the given confines, blank columns usually "adorned" the newspaper.

Naturally, Romania's entry into the war could not be hidden from the general public, but because such rumours had been circulating before, some journalists were extremely cautious at first:

Yesterday [...] the news that the state of war with Romania was declared and that hostilities had already begun at Orșova and Turnu-Severin spread by word of mouth throughout the town. The news seemed unbelievable. At first, we unflinchingly refuted it, being convinced it was a mystification [...]. Only in the evening was the news about the declaration of the state of war with Romania officially confirmed.

Let it serve to the public's honour that the news was received everywhere with the greatest tranquillity. No disorder occurred. The public attended its affairs as in other days without any emotion, as if nothing had happened²⁵.

This exemplary and unexpected behaviour was also remarked by Government commissioner Bethég who stated that "The population of Transylvania received the news of the outbreak of the Romanian war with indignation and grimness, but [also] with boundless tranquillity"²⁶. Though we might have our doubts regarding this alleged "indignation and grimness", calmness is much better documented.

Even if Romanian newspapers from Transylvania could not afford to affirm that Romania's action could have been motivated by the presence of almost 3 million Romanians within the Carpathian mountainous circle, this "possibility" was mentioned by Hungarian officious publications: "About the content of the note and the motives for declaring war, Pest.[er] Lloyd does not publish anything specific, but assumes that *the Romanian government uses the situation of the Romanians from the Monarchy as a pretext for declaring war*"²⁷.

Romanians' true opinions regarding this new enemy could not be properly manifested in the press, especially during the conflict's unfolding. Thus, a more constructive and especially more authorities-friendly attitude was that expressed

25. *Drapelul* XVI, 94 (1916): 2.

26. *Drapelul*, XVI, 95 (1916): 1.

27. *Drapelul* XVI, 95 (1916): 1, original emphasis. More details about the circumstances of Romania's entry into the war according to I. I. Brătianu in *Drapelul* XVI, 148 (1916): 2.

28. *Drapelul* XVI, 98 (1916): 2.

through “The voice of His Grace Bishop Ioan of Arad to the Romanian people” who stated that “This news, as unexpected as it was staggering, has filled our heart with a sorrow so much more profound and more harshly felt, as we could never believe that Romania would take up arms against the Monarchy in which, under the powerful shield of the dynasty of the glorious Habsburgs and under the benevolent care of our mother country, live millions of Romanians”. Within this context, the bishop urged priests, teachers and other members of the Romanian intelligentsia to “Advise everyone to watch over their self-control, to live in understanding with each other and with all the other compatriots of this common motherland, irrespective of language and customs; [...] to respect the laws and the administration, with submission, and to obey the military and civil authorities”²⁸.

Romania's entry into the war also impacted upon the type, quality and quantity of news regarding its royal family that could be printed by the Transylvanian press. Thus, the ample coverage of King Carol I's funeral, which filled with text and often with front-page photographs several numbers of *Cosânzeana*²⁹ for example, or the eulogistic articles dedicated to Queen Elisabeth at her death³⁰ represented a phenomenon that hardly could have been repeated after August 1916. Instead, when it came to reporting about King Ferdinand I, Queen Marie or their children³¹, Transylvanian journalists were forced to write a few short lines in a tone that was suitable for an enemy. Naturally, public manifestations of sympathy for the Romanian royal pair were completely banned, even (or even more so) in situations that had the potential to engender compassion as, for instance, parents losing a small child. As a result, three-year-old Prince Mircea's death was announced in rather neutral terms: “Thursday Prince Mircea of Romania departed this life, [after] he had been lying for several days sick of typhoid fever. The small prince, the 6th child of the royal pair, was born on 21 December old [style] 1912”³².

After the war ended, the Romanian monarchs were depicted in a completely different manner by the Transylvanian press, being considered “a family that has long desired us, has felt for us in our pains and which has given and gives resounding proofs that it loves us sincerely the way we are: with all our good qualities (sic!) and with all the flaws we have”³³. Transylvanians could thus only express

29. *Cosânzeana* IV 40-44 (1914): 49-50.

30. It is worth noting that the long article praising Queen Elisabeth and especially her literary activity under the pseudonym “Carmen Sylva” represented a reprint from a German newspaper and had originally appeared in 1913, when the Queen celebrated her 70th birthday, while the news regarding her death is much less detailed. See *Drapelul* XVI, 22 (1916): 1-3, with additional information in No. 23, p. 2 and No. 24, 1 and a piece of her writing, namely “A letter – short novel”, being published in No. 24-36.

31. Prince Carol was seen in a very favourable light by Transylvanians even before the war, as proven by *Noi* I, 1 (1913): 2-4.

32. *Drapelul* XVI, 123 (1916): 3.

33. *Cultura creștină* VIII, 7-8 (1919): 173-174.

their gratitude towards these sovereigns, “God’s messengers, who have delivered [the people] from the shameful slavery of Egypt and have taken it in the Promised Land, where milk and honey flow”³⁴. Moreover, Queen Marie was “the most excellent ambassador of the just Romanian cause”, while Prince Carol was viewed as a “good brother”³⁵. Therefore, the royal visit to Transylvania in the spring of 1919 was “surely the happiest event of all the – few – big and happy events bestowed upon the Romanian people by the Providence in the long row of centuries passed over its head: - the happiest event because it seals the national freedom and independence of a people who for a thousand years has bore the yoke of the bitterest servitude, a servitude that seemed to prepare for it just now a certain death, to the joy of its centuries-old enemies”³⁶.

1918-1919 – The much-desired peace

In 1918, exhausted after four long years of endless battles and extremely harsh living conditions, Transylvanians clung to any rumour of an upcoming peace, particularly as the number of casualties amongst their ranks was very high: “The Commission for monitoring soldiers’ graves has discovered until 1 June [1918], in Transylvania, 13,955 graves for soldiers, in which 22,120 war sacrifices are buried. It was determined that, amongst these, 8,713 are Austro-Hungarians and the rest: Romanians”³⁷. Moreover, this large number of deceased was associated with an even higher number of war victims in a broad sense and with “the many duties that we have towards the ones left behind: widows and orphans, invalids and cripples of all sorts”.

These pretty impressive figures raised Romanians’ hopes for a better future, even within the Dual Monarchy’s borders, because “In Austria the resolution of the nationalities’ question advances at a rapid pace. Reportedly within the shortest space of time the Emperor’s manifesto will appear, through which he will order the establishment of the national governments of the various peoples of Austria and the convocation of the national Diets. The relation between the various national states from Austria will be analogous to the one that exists today between Hungary and Austria. As we can see, the situation is still tremendously entangled and nobody knows what tomorrow will bring”³⁸.

Indeed, for a period of time, Transylvanian Romanians did not know what to expect from the now imminent peace, but the press spoke about “The rights that will be received by our people, as a well-earned reward for so many blood

34. *Cultura creștină* VII, 9-10 (1919): 177.

35. *Cultura creștină* VIII, 7-8 (1919): 174. See also the royal family’s image in *Gazeta Poporului* I, 30 (1918): 5-6.

36. *Cultura creștină* VII, 9-10 (1919): 177. See also *Drapelul* XIX, 47 (1919): 1-2.

37. *Unirea. Foaie bisericească-politică* (hereinafter: *Unirea*) XXVIII, 39 (1918): 1.

38. *Unirea* XXVIII, 64 (1918): 1.

sacrifices made on the battlefields”³⁹. This vague formulation suggests that the journalist could merely guess if these rights were to be granted as part of the Habsburgs’ Monarchy or in the case of another state, but, as most Transylvanians, he probably envisioned the enforcement of the principles put forth by the President of the United States of America, Woodrow Wilson, principles which postulated that “the entire foundation of the future peace and of good understanding between peoples is the proclamation of the equality of the right of each people, small or big, to be able to decide its fate, to be itself the master of its future”⁴⁰. *Gazeta Poporului* even went as far as to title “Wilson for the union of all Romanians”⁴¹.

This freedom of choice was especially important because “Transylvania is ours. It is wetted with Romanian blood and fattened up with the sweat of our grandfathers and great grandfathers. From one end of the country to the other you hear only Romanian words, you only see “*opinca*”⁴². [...] But Transylvania is Romanian not only by the right of our number, but even more so by the holy right of suffering. [...] The payment for prolonged sufferings cannot be but national freedom, in which all the powers of the people will develop without hindrance”⁴³.

Clearly, national ferment was strong at the end of the war and, as the Emperor’s manifesto turned out to be a total disappointment, the union with Romania was ever more present in the Transylvanian periodicals’ pages: “National unity above all else! The other things will get done when we speak about a single Romanian nation, about a single Romanian territory. When a single sway will take the reins of government in its hands and no Romanian will be under a foreign rule and no Romanian territory [will be] estranged”⁴⁴. Moreover, according to the same newspaper Transylvanians had to rejoice because: “The clock has rung! [...] The chains of slavery have collapsed in the dirt and our people raises its so far oppressed forehead – and looks around as a free people, which alone has the right to decide its fate. [...] Let the ugly dream of the past remain forgotten in the dark, - let’s all forget it as if it never existed! [...] Long live the freedom of all peoples! Long live the Romanian people!”⁴⁵.

Within this context, at Alba Iulia, Transylvanians asserted their “natural desire and firm decision to unite with all their blood brothers”⁴⁶ and it was strongly believed that once the decisions of the National Assembly would be recognised

39. *Cultura creștină* VII, 15-16 (1918): 325.

40. *Cultura creștină* VII, 17-20 (1918): 331-334.

41. *Gazeta Poporului* I, 46 (1918): 2.

42. *Opinca* is a footwear object worn in the past by peasants, made from a rectangular piece of leather and tight on leg

43. *Gazeta Poporului* I, 46 (1918): 1.

44. *Unirea* XXVIII, Propaganda supplement 10 (1918): 1.

45. *Unirea* XXVIII, 68 (1918): 1.

46. *Cultura creștină* VII, 17-20 (1918): 353-354.

by the peace conference “our people from this country (let us use once again this phrase!) will definitively unite with the Romanian brothers everywhere, hereby entering the era of the Romanian peace, meant to be a clot of peace and brotherhood for all the neighbouring peoples. Holy Romanian peace... may your kingdom come!”⁴⁷.

Seeking the union’s forerunners and reinterpreting the past

AFTER THE union became a *fait accompli*, Transylvanian intellectuals took the time to identify its precursors. The first obvious name that came to mind was that of Michael the Brave, the 16th-century ruler who united the three Romanian provinces for only a few months in 1600. Andrei Șaguna, the Orthodox Metropolitan, was also mentioned within this context in which “the dominant idea of today is *national unity*”, because, according to historian Ioan Lupaș, “It is certain that he has always harboured within the innermost part of his soul the desire to fulfil our national unity and has done for his part all that the period’s circumstances allowed him in order to prepare the path for this achievement”⁴⁸.

Yet Aurel Vlaicu was the one mostly identified with this accomplishment and considered its symbol even during the war, perhaps partly owing to his tragic death: “the genius of a Vlaicu, believing that he can mock an artificial border, was crushed by fate... But the thought will prevail and if Vlaicu had to perish, God willed it, so that *not one person, but a people* will think like Vlaicu, in each instant, that – *the Carpathians can be crossed...*”⁴⁹. The fact that the Romanian pilot died while he was attempting to fly over the mountains separating Romania and Transylvania transformed him into a powerful memento of communication between representatives of a people divided by political boundaries. Consequently, he was honoured both in writing and through monuments, as for example in “Ghiroș”, where the village’s inhabitants wanted the cross they erected in his memory to “always remind us of this hero of a beautiful dream”, a “genius of the Romanian people, who, by his tragic death, became a martyr to science and to the Romanian people’s aspirations of glory”⁵⁰.

Therefore, the fact that, after the Great Union, some of the first contacts between Romanians from either side of the Carpathians occurred by means of an airplane only emphasised Vlaicu’s role as a symbol:

47. *Cultura creștină* VII, 17-20 (1918): 334. For more enthusiastic visions of the future within Greater Romania see *Drapelul* XIX, 1 and 2 (1919).

48. *Patria. Organ al Partidului Național Român* I, 238 (1919): 1, original emphasis.

49. *Cosînzeana* IV, 8 (1914): 120, original emphases.

50. *Cosînzeana* IV, 18 (1914): 266. Vlaicu is depicted in similar terms iginal emphasis. This article is also available in *Gazeta Poporului*, 1918, Year I, No. 48, 5.

The first deputation from Wallachia has arrived today (Saturday) at one o'clock p.m. [...]

People ran from all sides acclaiming the airplane with Romanian colours.

After a few swerves over the town, the airplane landed on the Field of Liberty. Everyone rushed to that place, through ice, snow and dirt, to shake the hand of the brothers who were delivering the message of salvation.

They told us that the Romanian army had crossed the Carpathians – through a snow of over two meters – and that they came to embrace us with brotherly love and to announce the foreign inhabitants of these Romanian lands that they came in the name of peace and freedom for all peoples. [...]

The dream of Vlaicu and of millions of Romanians has been fulfilled.

He was the first deputation, the symbol; the “unfulfilled dream” mentioned by the poet.

Today's deputation is *the reality*, the triumph of the national principle over all the bygone obstacles⁵¹.

The concrete existence of Greater Romania also allowed Transylvanians to reinterpret their relation with the former “oppressors”, because

Looking upon our people's *past* from the pedestal of today's freedom, we see the thorns, the chains and the crosses along the lengthy road of its Golgotha and, oddly, we do not hate and we do not fret about those things that have caused us so many pains and humiliations. On the contrary, we cherish them, love them even, as we now better understand the caresses of sufferings and their power to rise us above and to clean our souls. Our entire past is revealed as a long and difficult Easter fast, having in the latter years the Good Friday, in which our enemies have worked with all their rage and with all their means to crucify us⁵².

Therefore, in this manner the Romanian people manifested another one of its traits, namely generosity, as it did not swear vengeance against its oppressors, but “forgave them, not wanting to repay evil with evil”⁵³.

52. *Cultura creștină* VII, 17-20 (1918): 352, original emphasis.

53. *Cultura creștină* VII, 17-20 (1918): 353.

Concluding remarks

THE FIRST World War has profoundly altered the lives of Transylvanian Romanians, not only during its unfolding, but also by its aftermath. Throughout the conflict, the press played multiple roles, some of the most important of these functions being those of provider of information, agent of mobilisation and advocate of national unity.

Obviously, as many other countries, Romania had to make a few difficult choices regarding its involvement in the conflagration and the period's press offered ample coverage of these troublesome times, within the limits imposed by censorship. The three key moments of the war from a Romanian perspective, namely October 1914, August 1916 and December 1918, are well represented in the pages of most Transylvanian periodicals, which thus had a major contribution to preparing Romanians for the post-war reality, specifically a much larger country incorporating vast territories which used to belong to empires that were now extinct, and for the numerous challenges that stemmed from this situation.

Hence, the general pieces of information published shortly before and during the war about the Romanian Kingdom, its royal family or even the accomplishments and death of Aurel Vlaicu served to create a favourable image of the neighbouring state amongst the Romanian subjects of the Dual Monarchy. After the Great Union, Romanian journalists were able to express themselves freely and their own and their compatriots' true sentiments became clear and they were excellently summed up in a frequently used slogan: "Long live Greater Romania!"

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ROMANIA'S NEUTRALITY IN THE EYES OF BANAT INTELLECTUALS (1914-1916)



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Abstract

This article discusses how Romanian neutrality up until 1916 was perceived by elite intellectuals in the Banat, against a background of heightened expectations. Also significant became the reaction of these same intellectuals when Romania entered the war. In conducting this research, we employ as sources the memoirs of these Banat intellectuals who took part in the conflict. As a consequence of changes in the military-political sphere during the First World War, the intellectual horizons of Romanian inhabitants of the Banat and Transylvania also began to shift, particularly at the start and end of the conflict. Romanian officers in the Austro-Hungarian had a crisis of conscience, caught between national feelings and obligations of loyalty towards the Austro-Hungarian throne. Intellectuals in the Banat region were close observers of political life in the Old Kingdom of Romania. However they were not au fait with all the political details of diplomatic talks held in Romania between the government and the belligerent countries in the First World War. This helps explain why the decision of the Romanian authorities not to enter the conflict in August 1914 in fact caused dissatisfaction and a sense that the country was being indecisive, a view held both by intellectuals in the Banat region and by some officers in the Romanian army. During the first two years of the war, up to 20,000 Romanian males of military age migrated from the Banat and Transylvania to the Old Kingdom. Romanian intellectual-sin Bucharest meanwhile agitated for the Romanian kingdom to enter the war on the side of the Entente, helping to shift public opinion in general in this direction. Romania's entry into the war in 1916 was then highlighted by all the press in Transylvania and the Banat. This occurred despite the Romanian language press in both territories having been either closed down or tightly censored since the start of the war. In an editorial published on 21 July/3rd August 1916 for example, the editors of 'The Flag', which continued to be published in Lugoj, expressed confidence in the decision making of the government of Romania, remarking that "Romanian politicians have always been marked by their wisdom, and their recent actions leave no cause to believe that this wisdom has left them"

Keywords

memoirs, Banat, neutrality, Great War, nationalism

THROUGH TIME, the First World War has attracted the interest of numerous researchers. In the landscape of Romanian historiography, hundreds of volumes and thousands of studies have been published on this topic. Documentary collections have offered historians the possibility to retrace the essential moments in the course of the international conflagration. The vast volume of sources used allowed the rendition of even the deepest feelings of the people involved, whether they were decision makers or mere observers. Once the overview of the worldwide conflict was reconstituted, the focus point shifted towards more local, provincial topics. The concern for a certain territoriality and its pertaining population determined an enlargement of the documentary base. Therefore, in order to capture the ethno-cultural, linguistic, and confessional complexity of a province, it became necessary to resort to sources that had been less capitalized upon, such as correspondence, journals, or memoirs¹.

Through the images conveyed in the memorial writings, which inarguably have the touch of the author's cultural and social level, the quondam world is not just animated, but individual portraits are etched, detaching the individuals from the crowd².

Romanian historiography enrolls in this trend, too, the recent period having witnessed the entry in the scientific circuit of a considerable number of works belonging to the memoir genre. In this discourse also listed is the endeavour of the historians Valeriu Leu, Nicolae Bocșan and Mihaela Bedecan in editing the corpus of memoirs of the people of Banat directly or indirectly involved in the First World War. The information resulted from reading these journals allow us to complete the picture outlined from other sources with inside details on the specificity of this Romanian province, a component of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918.

To be precise, our research focuses on capturing the manner in which the period of Romania's neutrality has been perceived by certain members of the Romanian elite in Banat under the conditions of a large waiting time span. Hence, the diplomat and politician Caius Brediceanu (1879-1953), the journalist and politician Sever Bocu (1874-1951), the officer Octavian Furlugeanu (1894-1979), the jurist and politician Coriolan Băran (1896-1979), the clergyman and journalist Nicolae Brânzeu (1883-1962), or the pedagogue and politician Pavel Jumanca (1886-1975) were those who, through the lines they have written, left for posterity testimonies of their inner emotions during that period.

As a result of the changes that occurred in the political and military context, in the memoirs of the Banat intellectuals, the participants in the world conflagration

1. Valeriu Leu, "Memorialistica românească din Banat referitoare la primul război mondial și la Unirea din 1918", *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, edition, study and notes by Valeriu Leu and Nicolae Bocșan, collaborators: Mihaela Bedecan and Ionela Moscovici; vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 8-9.
2. V. Leu, *Memorialistica românească din Banat*, 10-11.

gration expressed different, contradictory opinions, particularly at the beginning and at the end of the conflict.³

The war statement of Austro-Hungary against Serbia, dated 28th July 1914, did not produce an immediate reaction from the Romanian authorities, which also triggered puzzlement amongst many intellectuals in Transylvania and Banat. Certain circles kept, as the Austrian minister in Bucharest, Otto Czernin, would notice, an attitude of expectancy towards Vienna. Subsequently, the attitude radically changed, oscillating depending on various factors. Thus, following the positioning of the Great Powers and in a first stage of the war, there was a noticeable effervescence of the wish to liberate Transylvania and, implicitly, the desire to take part in the conflict. After the military victories of the Central Powers, there was a new tendency though, promoting the politics of waiting⁴.

Perceived as the best solution at that time, neutrality was almost unanimously approved by the Crown Council on 21st June/3rd August 1914. The German and Austro-Hungarian authorities were obviously dissatisfied with the position, being also unhappy with the failure recorded as a consequence of the interventions with the Hungarian government to make concessions for the Transylvanian Romanians⁵. They considered Romania's position to be determined by the intransigence of the official Hungarian circles.

The attitude of the Brătianu government and its opaque politics caused, according to the canon Nicolae Brânzeu, contradictory feelings among the Romanians of Banat, particularly in this first stage. "The smart manner in which Mr. Brătianu knew how to hide the real intentions of the country during the two-year neutrality, made the people in the country not sufficiently oriented"⁶.

The same opinion is also shared by Sever Bocu, a more refined connoisseur of the politics in Bucharest after his settlement in Dobruja in 1912. The confusion, intentionally created through the lack of transparency, generated, in his opinion, nothing more than the irritation of public opinion. The atmosphere thereby created was far from ideal, "for a country that was preparing for the supreme gesture of its freedom: the war"⁷.

3. Nicolae Bocșan, "Memoria bănățeană a Marelui Război și a Unirii cu România", in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)* edition, study and notes by Valeriu Leu and Nicolae Bocșan, collaborators: Mihaela Bedecan and Ionela Moscovici; vol. I, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 35.

4. Constantin Nuțu, *România în anii neutralității (1914-1916)* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1972), 114.

5. Anastasile Iordache, *Reorientarea politică a României și neutralitatea armată (1914-1916)* (Bucharest: Paideia Publishing House, 1998), 140.

6. N. Bocșan, *Memoria bănățeană a Marelui Război*, 37 [our translation].

7. Sever Bocu, "Drumuri și răscruci. Memorii", in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, edition, study and notes by Valeriu Leu and Nicolae Bocșan, collaborators: Mihaela Bedecan and Ionela Moscovici; vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 302 [our translation].

The latent unrest of the Transylvanian Romanians was even greater since the tensions had escalated in certain areas, mainly after the war broke. In this context, the clergyman from Lugoj would sum up in a few words the state of mind of the population in Banat, highlighting a background reality: “since the beginning of the war, our life was a continuous suspicion. Everything depended ...on Romania’s behaviour. Some feared it, others had high hopes for it”⁸. The situation of the Romanian population was even more difficult at the border of the Empire since, after the conflict broke, there was an unceasing moral pressure, particularly on intellectuals. In these buffer zones at the border, Brânzeu believed the aim was to “culturally eliminate the dominating element” so as to produce a rift between Transylvania and Romania⁹. In this context, the first “political prisoners” appeared, as they were called by the military priest Coriolan Buracu in his memoirs. More clergymen, lawyers, officers, teachers, or even peasants were imprisoned in the penitentiary of Caransebeș under the pretext they were “Romania’s spies and agitators with the goal of decomposing the Austro-Hungarian monarchy”¹⁰.

Only several months later, when King Carol I died, the same memorialist, Coriolan Buracu, while on the battlefield, would express his concern regarding the position of the authorities in Bucharest. “We were all worried about Romania’s attitude, fearing that once the wise ruler died, they would enter the war against us”¹¹.

Without knowing the ins and outs of the governing Romanian politics, Caius Brediceanu had the right guess about the side that Romania would take. Since the beginning of the war, he would state in his memoirs, the time had come for the union through the incorporation of all the provinces inhabited by Romanians. The goal was attainable, in his opinion, only by the relinquishment of old alliances: “I could feel that from then on Romania could no longer walk alongside the Central Powers and that the decisive hour was approaching for us, as well”¹². He would not be wrong in this assertion, particularly since he could feel the pulse of events.

The entry of Romania in the war on the side of the Triple Entente was foreseen by other intellectuals of Banat, as well. For instance, Nicolae Brânzeu was convinced that “the future was more and more pronounced. Only the term of Romania’s entering the action was unknown. Certain measures taken by the Hungarian authorities showed that the governments of the monarchy were being

8. Nicolae Brânzeu, (Memoriile unui preot bătrân), in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, edition, study and notes by Valeriu Leu and Nicolae Bocșan, collaborators Mihaela Bedecan and Ionela Moscovici; vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 491 [our translation].

9. Nicolae Brânzeu, *Memoriile unui preot bătrân*, 489.

10. C. Buracu, *Amintiri*, in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, edition, study and notes by Valeriu Leu and Nicolae Bocșan, collaborators: Mihaela Bedecan and Ionela Moscovici; vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 516.

11. C. Buracu, *Amintiri*, 540 [our translation].

12. N. Bocșan, *Memoria bănățeană a Marelui Război*, 40 [our translation].

misled. We had deluded ourselves so many times that new alarms would no longer impress us"¹³.

The same clergyman would herald the waiting time span for the Romanians in Transylvania and Banat. Around 1915, when there was effervescence in his dwelling area, he would advise his family to stay put "because nowhere was better, because our people are coming here, with brotherly love; they are coming to stay until the end of times"¹⁴.

Good observers of political life, the intellectuals of Banat, as well as a significant part of the Old Kingdom were not up to date with the details of the diplomatic talks held between the representatives of the Romanian government and those of the belligerent countries. Thus, it is precisely this position of the Romanian authorities that caused discontent and was labelled as indecisive. Moreover, the politicians in the Old Kingdom would ask the prime minister to provide valid explanations for the position taken. One of them was Nicolae Iorga, who, in an interpellation in the Parliament, uttered on 14th December 1915, emphasized the idea that neutrality did not mean abandoning the ideal, because a country that relinquished its national rights did not deserve to exist, but meant only a delay of the moment of its realization¹⁵. Through his lectures and writings, including the articles, he published in the *Neamul românesc* magazine, he did not reject but on the contrary drew the attention to synchronicity, pleading for efficiency in choosing the best moment to enter the war, and in approaching the alliance that would best support the demands of the Romanians¹⁶.

Romania's positioning at the beginning of the world conflagration stirred, as expected, a wave of contradictory feelings among the Romanians in Banat. Despite their convictions, the Romanians in the provinces which were part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, including Banat, had to answer the mobilization call. Those who refused passed to Romania, avoiding the enlistment, as it was the case of Coriolan Băran.

For that matter, the option to leave for the Kingdom was made by other intellectuals, too, for various reasons. For instance, the reason invoked by the journalist Avram Imbroane was that he would no longer be forced to publish manifests that impelled the Romanians of Banat to participate in a war foreign to their cause¹⁷. Their refuge in Romania was not without consequences though. In most

13. N. Brânzeu, *Memoriile unui preot bătrân*, 492 [our translation].

14. N. Brânzeu, *Memoriile unui preot bătrân*, 492 [our translation].

15. Apud Radu Milian, *Dezbateri parlamentare și de presă din România în perioada neutralității (1914-1916)*, in *Crisia*, 40, 1 (2010): 270.

16. Radu Milian, *Dezbateri parlamentare și de presă din România în perioada neutralității (1914-1916)*, 277.

17. Gheorghe I. Oancea, *Unirea din 1918. Contribuții bănățene (1848-1918)* (Timișoara: Tipografia Universității din Timișoara, 1988), 51.

cases, the Hungarian authorities ordered that they be declared traitors and be condemned.

The public opinion or that of the majority would harbour the same hope, visibly manifested more than once, and would relate to the desiderata of the Romanians in Transylvania, Banat, Bessarabia, and Bukovina. The issue of the Romanians in Transylvania recurred, quite a few times, as a sensitive subject on the agenda of diplomats. King Carol I himself would draw the attention of the Austrian ambassador to how the position of the Hungarian authorities regarding the Romanians in the provinces incorporated with the Empire had excited Romanian public opinion and had rendered almost impossible a collaboration between the two armies¹⁸.

In addition, some of the Romanian officers in the Old Kingdom openly expressed their desires. Romanian combatants of higher rank in the Austro-Hungarian army were also confronted with a genuine crisis of conscience, oscillating between their national feeling and one of duty to the throne, to which they were linked by oath¹⁹. An eloquent episode that highlights this situation is evoked by Octavian Furlungeanu in his memoirs. In a discussion with an officer of Romania, he would claim to be the supporter of A.C. Popivici's theory on the federalization of Romania, believing that the amelioration of the Romanians' situation could only come from Vienna. The answer received, denoting the state of mind of the majority in the Romanian army, surprised him, at least briefly. Loudly and firmly, his colleague answered: "*we are not to come to you, but you to us, that is the true union*"²⁰

The Romanian soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian army would not have the same dilemma. Part of them, but also among the officers, left for the battlefields determined to avoid dangers and death. According to his own testimonial, Caius Brediceanu was one of them. Rakishly, he would admit in his memoirs that the Hungarian Prime Minister, Tisza, was right to state that "the Romanian intellectuals sabotaged the war by commuting between stages and hospitals." He would himself spend only three days in the first line, the rest of the period being spent in the sedentary battery of Lugoj and at the military school of Pola, where he would teach equitation²¹.

Without having the same goal, some Romanian soldiers avoided the battlefield for completely different reasons, irrespective of their will. This was the case of Eftimie Gherman who, because of his pacifist beliefs which he promoted among

18. C. Nuțu, *România în anii neutralității (1914-1916)*, 115.

19. N. Bocșan, *Memoria bănățeană a Marelui Război și a Unirii cu România*, 35.

20. N. Bocșan, *Memoria bănățeană a Marelui Război și a Unirii cu România*, 40.

21. Caius Brediceanu, "Răsboiul mondial", in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, edition, study and notes by Valeriu Leu and Nicolae Bocșan, collaborators: Mihaela Bedeccean and Ionela Moscovici; vol. I, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 473.

his colleagues, was sent to the military court. Found guilty, he was sentenced to death, the punishment being subsequently commuted to 20 years in prison. Thus, during the entire war he was imprisoned at the "fortress jail" of Arad²². At his first sentence, a decisive role was played by the platoon commander, with whom he had previously had a blunt talk. The Hungarian officer used to claim in front of the Romanian soldiers that for a better future, the war had to be won by the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Eftimie Gherman, bothered by the repeated affirmations of his superior, provoked him to a private discussion. During this, he openly confesses that the Romanians had all interest for the monarchy to lose the war, as this was the only way they could claim their historical rights²³. Although the consequences of this discussion were not immediate, the Romanian soldier could feel them.

The indecision of the authorities in Bucharest, manifested during the neutrality, caused fear among the refugees of Transylvania and Banat in the Old Kingdom. Pavel Jumanca, one of them, expressed his anxiety. Following an analysis, he had concluded that it was only the Romanian intellectuals that were to be punished by the Hungarian authorities, in case of the extradition demanded by the representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, to be given as an example.

*"We were deserters, traitors of our country, who had broken our oath of allegiance to the throne and nation; it was us who ought to expiate this infringement of our duty. This problem was unspeakably difficult and we could find no solution for it. ... There is no doubt that they reserved this fate for the scholars, honouring them with an end in the forks"*²⁴.

The discontent of the former teacher turned into severe accusations upon the priests, who preferred, in his opinion, to keep the population in the darkness of the ignorance. The explanation for this attitude probably resided in his sadness about the procrastination of the engagement in the war²⁵.

On the other hand, Jumanca did not hesitate, including in his journal, to recall those politicians who publicly defended the Romanians in the territories integrated with the neighbouring empires. An example in this respect was Alexandru Marghiloman, who, although a Germanophile, had opposed the extradition of the Transylvanians and those of Banat, a measure demanded by Austro-Hungary²⁶. In

22. Valeriu Leu, Carmen Albert, *Banatul în memorialistice „măruntă” sau istoria ignorată*, (Reșița, 1995), 29.

23. Valeriu Leu, Carmen Albert, *Banatul în memorialistice „măruntă” sau istoria ignorată*, 28.

24. Pavel Jumanca, "În război", V, in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, II, *Memoriile lui Pavel Jumanca*, edition, study and notes by Valeriu Leu, Nicolae Bocșan, Mihaela Bedecan (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, Academia Română/Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2013), 438 [our translation].

25. N. Bocșan, "Introducere", in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, II, *Memoriile lui Pavel Jumanca*, 42.

26. Pavel Jumanca, "În război", V, 438-439.

addition, the number of the “deserters from the Austrian army” was substantial. He believed that more than 40,000 Romanians had come over the mountains entering the Romanian army, fighting “together with the great-grandchildren of Mircea and Stephen the Great”²⁷.

During the neutrality, the Banat intelligentsia were actively involved in the public debate on the topic of Romania’s entry into the war. Therefore, he would periodically participate in the meetings of the Cultural League, overcoming the disappointment caused by a part of the public opinion that would denigrate the refugees.

And he was not the only one. The Romanian elite that took refuge in the Old Kingdom supported most of the times the actions of the Pro-Entente group and, due to a concentrated effort, they managed to attract on the side of their dream, namely the union, a large majority of the Romanian public opinion. The contingent of the Transylvanians who took refuge in Romania was not at all negligible, in 1915 around 20,000 able-bodied individuals having left the province²⁸.

Subsequently, Jumanca was however content by the massive support manifested by the public opinion for Romania’s entry into war with a view to freeing Transylvania.

The initial disappointment of the intellectual of Banat was shared by other representatives of the Transylvanian elite. In a metaphorical expression, suggestive through the terms used, Lucian Blaga expressed the sorrow and misunderstanding of the decision made by the political factors in Bucharest to opt for neutrality. “In my desolation, Blaga said, I called Romania by the name of <Neutralia>. It was the same name where we would place all the fire of an unfaithful love”²⁹.

The act of 4th/16th August 1916, i.e. the signing of the treaty of alliance with the Triple Entente, was saluted by the people of Transylvania and Banat present in Romania. In the war statement against Austro-Hungary on 14th/27th August also highlighted was one of the essential reasons that had led to that step, namely the aggravation of the Romanians’ situation in the Empire³⁰. After two years of waiting, the Romanian government had chosen the alliance that allowed the completion of the state union. Deemed by some political people of those times as welcomed but delayed, the measure could not be adopted sooner for pragmatic reasons. The discussions with each country member of the alliance had been difficult and had required time. The representatives of Romania needed to convince their partners of dialogue on the legitimate rights of the country, using diplomatic arguments meant to avoid the susceptibilities of the Great Powers³¹.

27. Pavel Jumanca, “În război”, V, 442 [our translation].

28. Constantin Nuțu, *România în anii neutralității (1914-1916)*, 176.

29. Apud Ion Bulei, *Arcul așteptării. 1914. 1915. 1916* (Bucharest: Eminescu Publishing House, 1981), 192 [our translation].

30. A. Iordache, *Reorientarea politică a României și neutralitatea armată (1914-1916)*, 162.

31. A. Iordache, *Reorientarea politică a României*, 180.

Romania's entry into war was also hailed by the Romanian periodicals of Transylvania and Banat. Subjected to drastic censorship, many newspapers had been closed, but those that were still being printed highlighted the moment with particular emotion. The editors of *Drapelul* [The Flag], periodical that continued to be issued in Lugoj, expressed their trust in the decision makers in the Old Kingdom, in an article published on 21st July/3rd August 1916, so shortly before the decisive step to enter into the war. In the opinion of the journalists in Lugoj, the Romanian politicians had always distinguished themselves through their wisdom, and their actions gave no reason to believe that this proverbial wisdom had left them³². Despite the defective information, resulting from the authorities' censorship, the editors of the newspaper in Banat managed to convey to the readers the most important pieces of news on the deployment of the conflagration and the actions of the Romanian army.

Beyond the feelings of ecstasy and agony generated by the decisions of the political factors in Bucharest between 1914 and 1916, the intellectual elite of Banat rallied around the belief that "national life in Transylvania was only possible under the shield of the Romanian royal emblem"³³. Through the lines of their journals, the memorialists of Banat did no more than express the expectations, doubts, fears, and desires of the Romanian population in the provinces integrated into the neighbouring empires, and which would then be incorporated into Romania in 1918.

32. Gheorghe I. Oancea, *Unirea din 1918. Contribuții bănățene (1848-1918)*, (Timișoara: Tipografia Universității din, 1988), 52.

33. Apud Ion Bulei, *Arcul așteptării. 1914. 1915. 1916, 192.*

"MY PARTICIPATION IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR"

The Manuscript Diary of the Transylvanian Saxon, Otto Folberth



MIRCEA-GHEORGHE ABRUDAN

Abstract

This study presents a general image of the unpublished war diary of Otto Folberth, preserved in the archive of the Transylvanian Institute in Gundelsheim. The aim of the research is to make this primary document, written during the conflagration, known to the historians of the Great War, thus introducing it into the larger scholarly circuit and thereby contributing to the rediscovery and reassessment of the war, evaluating its history and its image by seeing it through the eyes of a 20-year-old lieutenant who wrote about his first-hand experience from July 1915 to January 1919. Folberth's diary is a unique source that presents life during the Great War in Central Europe. It tackles political, military, religious, social and ideological topics, expressed through quotes from his own correspondence, from letters of his companions, from official talks with civilians, from anonymous military poems and songs, all filtered through his experience.

Keywords

The Great War, Transylvania, Galicia, Germany, War diary

IN RECENT years, as the world commemorated 100 years from the beginning of the First World War, a good number of Romanian and foreign historians have focused their attention on this event, wishing to make it accessible once more to the historiographical milieu and to the general public by showcasing new perspectives on and dimensions of the Great War ('La Grande Guerre', 'Der Große Krieg') as it remained in the collective memory of the Europeans to this day¹. The cultural approaches to history as well as those of an inter-, pluri-, and trans-disciplinary nature by far dominate the European historiographical discourse, whose exponents have long abandoned the history of events and facts which is chiefly based on the analysis and interpretation of the political, diplomatic, and military sources; instead, they turned to considering the social, economic, cultural, and demographical impact and the human aspect of war, creating laboratories for retrieving and highlighting new or previously insufficiently explored sources². One of the fundamental sources for the cultural history of war – namely the literary genre composed of diaries, memoirs, autobiographies, and letter exchanges – is currently enjoying special scholarly attention because of its capacity to provide insights into individual and collective destinies and mentalities³. On

1. On the history of the Great War, see Jay Winter (ed), *The Cambridge History of the First World War, Volume I. Global War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Jay Winter (ed), *The Cambridge History of the First World War, Volume II. The State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Jay Winter (ed), *The Cambridge History of the First World War, Volume III. Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Gerhard Hirschfeld, Gerd Krumeich and Irina Renz (eds), *Enzyklopädie Erster Weltkrieg, Erneut aktualisierte und erweiterte Studienausgabe* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2014); Jörn Leonhard, *Die Büchse der Pandora: Geschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs* (München: Beck Verlag, 2014); Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Jean-Jacques Becker, *Encyclopédie de la Grande Guerre 1914-1918: histoire et culture* (Bayard: Paris, 2004).
2. On the historiography of the war, see Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee and Frans Coetzee (eds), *Empires, Soldiers, and Citizens. A World War I Sourcebook* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013); Petra Ernst, Sabine A. Haring and Werner Suppanz (eds), *Aggression und Katharsis. Der Erste Weltkrieg im Diskurs der Moderne* (Wien: Passagen Verlag, 2004); Jay Winter and Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History. Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the Present. Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare*, General Editor Jay Winter Yale University (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Toader Nicoară, "Istoriografia 'Marelui Război': de la istoria politico-diplomatică la noua istorie culturală," in *Războiul și societatea în secolul XX/Guerra e società nel XX secolo*, ed. Gheorghe Mândrescu, Giordano Altarozzi (Cluj-Napoca – Rome: Editura Accent, 2007), 34-44.
3. Nicolae Bocșan, Valeriu Leu, "Memorialiști români din Banat despre Marele Război. Motivația redactării scrierilor" in *Primul Război Mondial: perspectivă istorică și istoriografică. World War I: A Historical and Historiographical Perspective*, ed. Ioan Bolovan, Gheorghe Cojocaru and Oana Mihaela Tâmaș (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane/Presă Universitară Clujeană, 2015), 42. On this subject of the cultural history and memory of the First World War, see also Ernst Piper, *Nacht über Europa. Kulturgeschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Berlin: List Taschenbuch, 2014); Shanti Sumartojo and Ben Wellings (eds), *Nation, Memory and Great War Commemoration. Mobilizing the Past in Europe, Australia and New Zealand* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2014); Bart Ziino (ed), *Remembering the First World War* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

the other hand, the significance of this genre for the Romanian environment also derives from the fact that the beginnings of the historiography of the Great War are found and must be sought therein⁴.

In this study I wish to outline a general image of the unpublished war diary of Otto Folberth (1896-1991) and to provide the reader with a series of fragments from it; the diary is currently preserved in the Archive of the 'Transylvanian Institute' (Siebenbürgen-Institut) in Gundelsheim, Germany⁵. The aim of my research is to make this primary document, written during the conflagration, known to the historians of the Great War, thus introducing it into the larger scholarly circuit and thereby contributing to the rediscovery and reassessment of the war, evaluating its history and its image by seeing it through the eyes of a 20-year-old Transylvanian Saxon lieutenant who wrote of his first-hand experience of those days.

Before proceeding to the presentation of Folberth's diary I should mention that his war diary is a part of what can be described as the Transylvanian Saxons memoirs about World War I, consisting of both *published works*, which saw the light of print mainly in periodicals, and *unpublished works*, preserved in different Archives Institutions from Romania and Germany like the rich 'Brukenthal collection of documents', held in the 'Sibiu County Branch of the Romanian National Archives', and like the archive of the Transylvanian Institute in Gundelsheim and the archive of the 'Institut für deutsche Kultur und Geschichte Südosteuropas' in Munich (both in Germany). These writings were authored by Saxon memoirists from Transylvania during the war, in its immediate aftermath and in the interwar period. Among these memoirists, there were certain differences as regards their social, professional and educational backgrounds: the authors of these war-related autobiographies, memoirs, memories and diaries included peasants, workers, teachers, officers, lawyers, members of the Evangelical clergy and journalists⁶.

Transylvanian Saxons⁷ – the German minority in Transylvania which, according to its own estimates, comprised 230,697 inhabitants on 31 December 1910⁸ – experienced euphoria at the outbreak of the war. Their sense of loyalty and duty to the sovereign in Vienna was doubled by their national filiation, as well as by

4. Valeriu Leu, "Memorialistica românească din Banat referitoare la primul război mondial și la Unirea din 1918," in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*. Anthology, edition, studies and notes by Valeriu Leu and Nicolae Bocșan; contributors: Mihaela Bedecan and Ionela Moscovici (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 12.

5. About the history, the organisation, the library and the archives of this cultural institute, see its webpage <http://www.siebenbuerger-institut.de/>.

6. Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan, "Primul Război Mondial în Memorialistica sașilor din Transilvania/The Great War reflected in the War Memoirs of the Transylvanian Saxons," *Astra Salvensis-Revistă de istorie și cultură*-, 5 (2015): 89-104.

7. On the history of Transylvanian Saxons, see Michael Kroner, *Geschichte der Siebenbürger Sachsen, Band I-II*. (Nürnberg: Verlag Haus der Heimat, 2007-2008).

8. Friedrich Teutsch, *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Leipzig: Verlag von K. F. Roehler, 1916), 350.

their strong belief in the invincibility of the German Empire, which they regarded as their true “Motherland” (*Mutterland*) and the benchmark of European states. Mobilization was carried out against a highly sentimental background and was supported by the elites, whose representatives were hoping for a swift victory of the Central Powers. This explains the population’s prompt response to the call to arms launched by the emperor, enrolments being reinforced by high numbers of volunteers and by donations in money, agricultural products, and assets for the war loans⁹.

The protraction of military operations, Romania’s entry into war and the opening of the Transylvanian front¹⁰, which included mostly the regions inhabited by the Saxons, exerted a considerable psychological impact on this community. The emerging state of insecurity and panic generated a refugee phenomenon, in the sense that there occurred a massive evacuation of both the elites and the common people towards areas that were under lesser threat from the frontline¹¹. The victory of the Entente and the Transylvanian Saxons’ burning aspiration to preserve their own identity within the newly created political framework led, in January 1919, to the adoption of the well-known Mediaș Proclamation, which acknowledged the Saxons’ adherence to the Union of Transylvania with Romania¹².

The Saxons’ participation in Austria-Hungary’s war effort and the impact of the global conflagration on the small German-speaking community from Transylvania are only known in very broad lines, as the only information in this respect was provided by Bishop Friedrich Teutsch (1852-1933)¹³ in a few pages of

9. For details concerning the attitude of the Saxon ecclesiastical elite towards the outbreak of war and the actions undertaken in the community during the first months of the war, see: Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan, “Atitudinea conducerii Bisericii Evanghelice din Transilvania față de izbucnirea Primului Război Mondial,” in Rodica Groza (ed), *Sebeș, timp regăsit... Lucrările Conferinței “100 de ani de la declanșarea Primului Război Mondial. Contribuția sebeșenilor la război și Marea Unire” (5 decembrie 2014)* (Sebeș: Editura Emma Books, 2014), 65-82; Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan, “Die Haltung der Evangelischen Landeskirche A. B. in Siebenbürgen gegenüber dem Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkriegs,” *Österreichisch-Siebenbürgische Kulturbeiträge*, 7 (2015): next to be published.
10. On the Romanian Kingdom’s participation in the war, see the very good study written by American historian Glenn E. Torrey, *The Romanian Battlefront in World War I*, (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 2011).
11. Emil Sigerus (ed), *Aus der Rumänenzeit. Ein Gedenkbuch an sturmbelegte Tage. Zugunsten der siebenbürgisch-sächsischen Kriegswitwen und -weisen* (Hermannstadt: Druck und Verlag von Joseph Drotleff, 1917).
12. For details about the Saxons’ adherence to the union with Romania and about the conference held in Mediaș, see Vasile Ciobanu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea istoriei sașilor transilvăneni 1918-1944* (Sibiu: Editura Hora, 2001), 29-67; Vasile Ciobanu, *Germanii din România în anii 1918-1919* (Sibiu: Editura Honterus, 2013).
13. He was born in Sighișoara in 1852, in the family of Georg Daniel Teutsch, who was headmaster of the Saxon Evangelical Gymnasium in that town. He studied theology and history at Heidelberg, Leipzig and Berlin. From 1906 to 1930, he was Bishop of the Evangelical Church

his works about the history of Transylvanian Saxons and the history of the Evangelical Church in Transylvania. Teutsch briefly outlined the casualties and the requisitions suffered by the Saxon nation during the war, emphasizing its social, economic and humanitarian contributions to the war effort and showing that the unexpectedly long protraction of the war had proved extremely burdensome for his co-nationals: the 37,533 soldiers who had been sent to the front represented no less than 16% of the total Saxon population. The number of individuals who had lost their lives by the end of the war was presented as follows: of the 37,533 people who had enrolled in the army, 10,343 received military distinctions thanks to their bravery on the battlefields, 3,532 died in the theatres of war, 1,318 were reported missing, 4,779 were injured, 1,449 returned home as invalids, 4,840 became prisoners of war, 1,865 Saxon women took on the robe of widowhood and 4,346 children were orphaned. Besides these human sacrifices, the Saxons' material effort amounted to 3 million *korona*, excluding the damage incurred during the armed confrontations that took place in Transylvania in the months of August and September 1916, these battles having also caused the evacuation of 30,000 Saxons from the affected areas¹⁴.

Like other nations that had been forced by the major European powers to wage a war of attrition in the trenches, many representatives of the Saxon elites (generals) or middle classes (priests, teachers, lawyers, civil servants), who had fought on the front and returned to their homes, published their memoirs, campaign diaries and the letters they had sent from the front, either during the years of armed conflict or in those following the end of hostilities. In their writings, they conveyed their own perspective on their personal, first-hand experience from the terrible years of armed confrontations, on the various kinds of deprivation they had endured, on the plagues and epidemics they had been faced with, and on the horrors and terrors they had witnessed in those limit-moments of life, in the immediate presence of the final frontier: death.

Historian and literatus Otto Folberth was born on 10th July 1896 in Mediaș, studied at the local Saxon gymnasium of his hometown, and then attended

of Augustan Confession in Transylvania. After the Great Union, he was elected senator in the Bucharest Parliament and became a titular member of the Romanian Academy. He is considered the most prolific 20th-century historian of the Saxons, his bibliography totalling 1,351 titles. He passed away in Sibiu in 1933. For bibliographical details, see Rudolf Spek, "Bibliographie Friedrich Teutsch," *Archiv des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde* 47 (1933): 81-125; Karl Kurt Klein, "Sachsenbischof Friedrich Teutsch," *Südostdeutsche Heimatblätter*, 2 (1953): 5-18; Eduard Eisenburger, "Friedrich Teutsch," in Dieter Drotleff (ed), *Taten und Gestalten. Bilder aus der Vergangenheit der Rumäniendeutschen, Band II* (Hermannstadt: Hora Verlag), 116-119.

14. Friedrich Teutsch, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche, Band II. 1700-1917* (Hermannstadt: W. Krafft Verlag, 1922), 587-615; Friedrich Teutsch, *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, 2. vermehrte Auflage (Hermannstadt: W. Krafft Verlag, 1924), 280-287.

Hungarian-, German-, and Roman studies, Art History, Pedagogy, and Theology at the universities of Budapest, Berlin, Heidelberg, Tübingen, Cluj, and Paris. In the interwar period he was a teacher and head master of the Gymnasium in Mediaș. In 1947 he left Romania and settled in Salzburg, Austria, where he worked for the *Forschungsinstitut für Wirtschaft und Politik*. At the same time he had an intense literary life, writing studies on the history of Transylvanian Saxons, literature, stories, and poems, some of which remain in manuscript form to this day. He passed away at the age of 96, on the 5th of November 1991¹⁵. Otto Folberth became a



Otto Folberth.

part of the cultural history of Transylvanian Saxons because of his literary and historical works, partially still unpublished. He is known to the central-European historiographical scene especially for his diligent efforts to publish critical editions of the work of Stephan Ludwig Roth – a Saxon Evangelical-Lutheran priest executed in Cluj during the revolution of 1848-49, whose memory is cherished by the Romanian culture because of his writing ‘The Language Fight in Transylvania’ (*Der Sprachkampf in Siebenbürgen*) in which he advocated the equality of the Hungarian, German, and Romanian languages, stating that the latter of the three was known by all the inhabitants of Transylvania¹⁶.

Before going into the contents of Folberth’s manuscript, I should note that this diary has been recently mentioned and shortly presented in German by professor emeritus Horst Schuller in the scientific review ‘Spiegelungen. Zeitschrift für deutsche Kultur und Geschichte Südosteuropas’, no.3/2012, of the ‘Institute for German Culture and History in Southeast Europe’ (‘Institut für deutsche Kultur und Geschichte Südosteuropas’) from Munich¹⁷. In my post-doctoral research project focused on ‘The Transylvanian Saxons’ Historiography and Memorialistic Literature of the First World War’ I was able to obtain a scanned copy of Otto Folberth’s diary from the archivist of the Gundelsheim

15. On his life and bibliography, see Hermann A. Hienz, *Schriftsteller-Lexikon der Siebenbürger Deutschen. Bio-Bibliographisches Handbuch für Wissenschaft, Dichtung und Publizistik. Band VI, D-G* (Köln-Weimar-Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1998), 93-139.
16. Stephan Ludwig Roth, *Lupta pentru limbă în Transilvania*, prefață de Camil Mureșanu, traducere de Cristina Teodorescu, ediție îngrijită și note de dr. Constantin Vlăduț (București: Editura Gramar, 1998, 2nd ed. 2009). About Roth, see Lucian Giura, *Pe urmele lui Stephan Ludwig Roth*, (Sibiu: Editura Universității Lucian Blaga, 1999).
17. Horst Schuller, “Selbstzeugnis und Zeitdokument. Die als Quelle noch nicht genutzten Kriegstagebücher Otto Folberths,” *Spiegelungen. Zeitschrift für deutsche Kultur und Geschichte Südosteuropas*, 61 (2012), 279-294.

Institute; the document was later uploaded to the web page of the Siebenbürgen-Institut and can now be downloaded free of charge¹⁸.

The diary is composed of 58 notebooks, 25 to 30 pages each, with entries beginning at the time Folberth was just 14, up to 90 years of age. The manuscript was typed by one of the author's four sons, Paul Joachim Folberth, who donated it to the Institute of Gundelsheim in 2009. Nine of the 58 notebooks of the young Lieutenant Otto Folberth's diary, from 2nd June 1915 to 19th January 1918, filled in while he was stationed on the Eastern Front of the great conflagration¹⁹, are gathered under the title "My participation in the First World War" (*Mein Einsatz im Ersten Weltkrieg*). He recorded his experiences on the Galician front²⁰, his leaves, the final days of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy²¹, the atmosphere in Budapest and Transylvania in November and December 1918 and January 1919. In the 1930's he published a series of poems and stories reflecting his memories of the First World War, in the Saxon press of Transylvania: *Genezareth, Ein Musketier in Siebenbürgen, Der Meierhof von Urlow, Die Garde, 1 Geschütz, 16 Pferde, 20 Mann, Geschichte einer siebenbürgischen Kameradschaft*. These small works follow the literary, belletristic, and journalistic trend of the Saxon cultural elite of the interwar years, but they also reflect the author's wish to recover the war memories of his fellow Saxons, who in that era had published similar texts in all the German publications in Transylvania.

The first entry concerning the war appears in notebook no. IX shortly after Folberth had turned 18 and is dated 31st July 1914, when he wrote that 'general mobilization has been decreed a few hours ago. The King summoned us and I will follow him wholeheartedly and happily'. These lines hint in Folberth's case not to the mad enthusiasm of a 18-year-old adolescent, as one might think looking back, but rather to the euphoria of the masses in the kingdom, their affection and

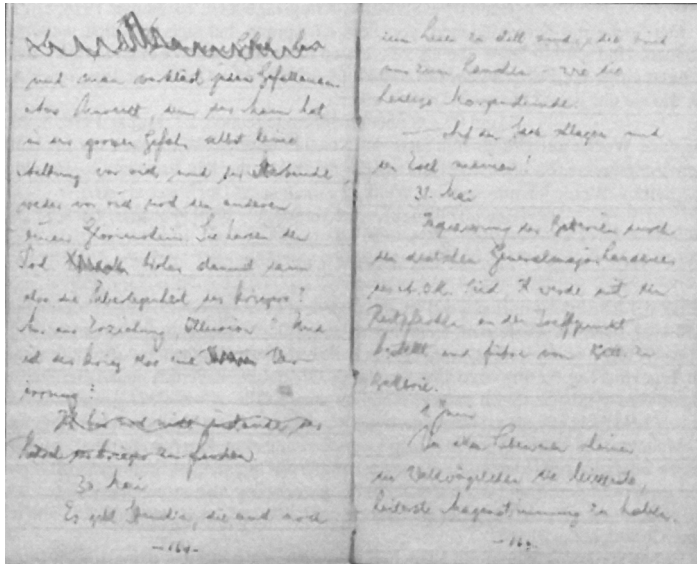
18. Folberth's journal was typed during the years 1999 and 2000 by one of his sons, Paul J. Folberth, and it can be accessed in electronic format on the website of the Transylvanian Institute in Gundelsheim: <http://siebenbuergen-institut.de/special-menu/span-stylecolor000000-text-decorationunderline-transylvanicaspan/die-tagebuecher-von-otto-folberth/>, accessed on 28 January 2016.
19. For details on the evolution of this front, see: Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front, 1914–1917* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975).
20. About this front at the beginning of the war, see Nikolai Golovkin, "The great battle of Galicia (1914): a study in strategy," *The Slavonic Review* 5 (1926–1927), 25–47. Also on the internet: <http://www.consimgames.com/docs/Golovin%20Battle%20of%20Galacia%20article.pdf>, accessed 28 January 2016.
21. For details on the origins of the War, the participation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the First World War and the end of the Habsburgs, see Manfred Rauchensteiner, *Der Erste Weltkrieg und das Ende der Habsburgermonarchie 1914–1918* (Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2013); Günter Bischof and Ferdinand Karlhofer (Eds.), *1914: Austria-Hungary, the Origins, and the First Year of World War I* (New Orleans: University of New Orleans Press, 2014).

loyalty towards the old sovereign in Wien who had entitled his war proclamation 'An meine Völker!'

The war diary itself begins in Gușterița (Hammersdorf, today a district of Sibiu), on 2nd June 1915 with a quote from Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*: 'Do not deride the years gone by. They are all that we are left with,' ('*Verachte nicht gelebte Jahre! Sie sind alles, was uns bleibt*'). This entry is followed by a series of interrogations in which Folberth seems to talk with his diary and with his self: 'will I, my war, be able to record in this notebook the beautiful, terrifying, and unusual moments? Will I be able to? Will you become the mirror of my soul, as did the notebooks before you?'. Folberth goes on to justify the war he had gotten involved in, but surprisingly the main reason is not revenging Franz Ferdinand's assassination, punishing Serbia, and fending off the Russian danger; he notes that 'we fight a single battle: Europe's battle against England'. In his view, this battle was 'Germany's destiny', even though the Kaiserreich had effectively become the enemy of half of Europe. Young Folberth believed that through this war Germany, the country he feels he is connected with through the language he speaks, his origin and his culture, was merely fulfilling what France had attempted a century before under emperor Napoleon I²²: 'a lot of bitterness, but an uplifting task'. The arguments he later invokes to substantiate his views are akin to the socialist dialectic – which rejected the nobility's amassing riches by exploiting the poor –, as well as the German political discourse of the time – which decried the absence of a colonial empire²³. Folberth saw in England's colonialist programme an absolute and unscrupulous exploitation of the world by a 'decadent capitalist policy'. The following notes reveal the young Saxon's admiration for the personality of the first French emperor and for his anti-British strategies; Folberth quotes Napoleon's diary and his plans to invade Great Britain; he also deplored Germany's hardships caused by the 'diabolical English diplomats' who had succeeded in convincing France, Russia, Italy, and Serbia to join in on their side, thus forcing Kaiser Wilhelm II²⁴ to fight on two fronts against his enemies who would only be completely defeated after the Germans eliminate Russia, stem the tide of French hatred, and debark on the English shores.

From the next entry, written on 6th June 1915, we gather young Folberth was enrolled as a cadet in the K.u. K. army and was anxious to get to the front line,

22. About his reign and biography, see: David A. Bell, *Napoleon: A Concise Biography* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); John Abbott, *The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* (Oxford: Kessinger Publishing, 2005).
23. For an explanation about the political and ideological situation in Europe on that time, see: Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914* (London: Penguin Books, 2013).
24. Born in Berlin in 1859, Frederick William Victor Albert known as Kaiser Wilhelm II, King of Prussia, German Emperor, war leader and defeated exile, was one of the most important - and most controversial - figures in the history of twentieth-century Europe. About him, see Christopher Clark, *Kaiser Wilhelm II: A Life in Power* (London: Penguin Books, 2009).



Page manuscript from Folberth's diary

where the war was raging. These first few diary pages from June-July 1915 show that Otto Folberth, as many of his fellow citizens, had fallen into the trap laid out by the state propaganda in the press, with the help of local authorities and churches, meant to stimulate enrolment and donations for the war effort and to bolster the troops' fighting spirit²⁵. A most interesting and, I believe, singular aspect – one I had not encountered in the Saxons' memoirs referring to the WWI – is found in a series of notes from 1915 to 1917; there, contrary to anyone's assumption, we learn that Otto Folberth had had enough of the Eastern front and wanted to keep fighting and be transferred on the Italian front, which he considered far more tempting, more dramatic and even more 'full of adventure' than the one in Galicia.

As the conflict and the front horrors went on the initial enthusiasm of Otto Folberth decreased noticeably: along the events and facts recorded during 1917-

25. For details on the war propaganda of the Central Powers, see Ulrike Oppelt, *Film und Propaganda im Ersten Weltkrieg. Propaganda als Medienrealität im Aktualitäten- und Dokumentarfilm* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002); Eberhard Demm, *Ostpolitik und Propaganda im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Frankfurt am Main-Wien: Peter Lang, 2002); Klaus-Jürgen Bremm, *Propaganda im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Darmstadt: Theiss Verlag, 2013); Elisabeth Buxbaum, *Des Kaisers Literaten. Kriegspropaganda zwischen 1914 und 1918* (Wien: Eduard Steinbauer Verlag, 2014). On the dissemination channels and the instruments used for the war propaganda in Transilvania, see Tudor Valentin Neamțu, "Propagandă și cenzură în Transilvania 'Marelui Război'", in *Scrieri pe alee. Lucrările Conferinței Naționale O filă de istorie: om, societate, cultură în secolele XVII-XXI*, Ed. Anamaria Macavei and Roxana Dorina Pop (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 353-368.

1918 Folberth interposes deep rhetorical questions referring to the ‘madness of war’, the destruction and death it visits upon people, the illusions of military heroism, the last breaths of anonymous suffering soldiers, and explicitly manifests his desperate desire for the war to end and for the final peace to be signed. I wish to list a series of aspects found among the many topics Folberth addressed in his front diary, elements relevant to the cultural history of the Great War: regional life styles, being homesick, the portrayal of human typologies, mind-sets, and collective psychologies, war images, expressing feelings such as love or friendship for certain people he had met.

Accompanied by photographs, military and campaign sketches, Folberth’s notes represent a still unpublished and unique source for understanding not only military actions or scenes, but also the lives of the soldiers and that of the civilians struggling behind the front and from its immediate proximity. The young lieutenant tackles political, military, ideological, philosophical, religious, social, and anthropological issues, which he develops by using quotations from his private correspondence, from letters of his companions-in-arms, from official dispatches, from talks he had with civilians (Ukrainians, Poles or Hungarians) but also with the enemy (Russians, Rumanians, Serbs), from anonymous army songs and poems, especially from German poems (written by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, Rainer Maria Rilke): all texts and stories that he passes through his own psychological and emotional filters. In addition to the facts and events it depicts, Folberth’s diary impresses the reader through its profound rhetorical interrogations referring to the “madness of war,” the desire for peace, the destruction and death that war wrought among people, the illusions of military heroism, the last moments in the lives of suffering anonymous soldiers. Folberth has an accurate, detailed style, his texts revealing his genuine literary talent, one that would later be confirmed by his published poetry, novels, and historiographic texts.

In conclusion the full publication of this war diary in the future will certainly lead to a rediscovery and a recalibration of the image of the First World War in Central Europe, seen and assessed through the eyes of a twenty-year old German lieutenant from Transylvania, who wrote about his everyday experiences in the “heat” of the moment, his reflections being thus protected from the polishing interferences that are inherent in any post-evental descriptive effort.

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RUSSIAN IMAGES AND IMPRESSIONS IN THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE REFUGEE HORTENSIA COSMA-GOGA AND OCTAVIAN GOGA (JANUARY-APRIL 1917)

■
MIHAI D. DRECIN

Abstract

Partenie Cosma, General Manager of the “Albina” Bank in Sibiu, between 1885-1915, together with his wife and his daughter Hortensia – Octavian Goga’s spouse (since the spring of 1915), move to their villa in Călimănești (Romania). His relations with the top political world in Bucharest allowed him to know, in advance, the Romanian Government’s decision to join the Entente. In that event, his important personality for the Romanian nation in Transylvania would have inevitably attracted his arrest by the Austro-Hungarian authorities. His age (78 years old) would not have allowed him to hold the condition of political prisoner. In the autumn of 1916, Partenie Cosma’s family retreated to Iași. The political and military uncertainties that marked the Romanian State retired in Moldavia led him to think of finding refuge somewhere in Western Europe, in an ally state to Romania. The only possible route was through the Tsarist Russia. Between January and April 1917, Partenie Cosma and his family peregrinated on the route Iași – Chișinău – Bender (Tighina) – Odessa – Petrograd. Very interesting for the situation-awareness and the atmosphere at the level of the common man in Russia in full revolutionary boiling, but also the Romanians refugees here, including Romania’s High Commission at Petrograd entourage, are Hortensia’s letters sent to her husband located in Iași, editor of the “România” newspaper. Some of these letters are replies to the letters of her husband, which unfortunately have not been kept. Significant is the fact that, in spite of the material hardships and health faced by Partenie Cosma, Hortensia was optimistic for the future of Romania. She encouraged her husband in the efforts he operated in the service of the national interest.

Keywords

Hortensia Goga, Octavian Goga, correspondence, Russia, January-April, 1917.

HORTENSIA COSMA was one of the five children of Partenie Cosma, advocate, politician and general manager of the “Albina” Bank in Sibiu¹.

The couple Maria and Partenie Cosma had the following heirs: Romulus (who had died in infancy), Remus, Lucia (married to Dr. Aurel Cosma, a solicitor in Timișoara), Minerva (married to colonel Schaffer) and Hortensia (married to Octavian Goga, poet and politician)².

Hortensia's marriage to the “national poet” took place in Bucharest in 1906, on the occasion of the Exhibition organized for the 40-year celebration since the accession to the throne of Romania of the ruler (prince) Carol I. their godfathers were the poet Alexandru Vlahuță and his wife, Venturia, born Lapedatu, cousin to the Cosma sisters³.

Partenie Cosma's strong liaisons, in what concerns the bank and political business, with the bank system and the political parties in the Kingdom of Romania allowed him to know the diplomatic orientation of Bucharest around and at the beginning of World War I. Moreover, Partenie Cosma's family built, in 1912, a villa in a balneal resort in Călimănești (Romania). During the summer holidays, during the rest of the year, in Călimănești and Sibiu, the Cosma family often had guests from all over Romania: university professors, bankers, top politicians.

Consequently, since 1915, Partenie Cosma had known about Romania's political orientation towards the Entente. To avoid its arrest by the Austro-Hungarian authorities, being one of the most prominent leaders of the Romanian society in Transylvania, taking into account his age (he was 78 years old at that time), he retires with his family to Călimănești. From there, he witnesses Romania's entry in the war, the offensive of the Romanian Army in Transylvania, then the retreat from Oltenia, Muntenia and Dobrogea to Moldova. The Cosmas move to Iași, except for Lucia Cosma, while Remus had been in Romania since the autumn of 1914. He then volunteered to join the Romanian Army, writing to the Austro-Hungarian military bodies that he refused to fight under the flag of the Bucephalus Empire⁴.

1. A Professor at the Department of History within the University of Oradea. Mihai D. Drecin, *Banca „Albina” din Sibiu-instituție națională a românilor transilvăneni (1871-1918)* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1982), 83-88.
2. Pavel Berariu, *Partenie Cosma în slujba Ardealului*, Tip Cooperativă „Litera Creștină”, București, f.a., 17.
3. *Octavian Goga în corespondență. Documente literare*, edition coordinated by Mihai Bordeianu and Ștefan Lemny (București: Ed. Minerva, 1983), vol II, 41-42.
4. Mihai D. Drecin, “O instituție bancară din Transilvania în vremurile Primului Război Mondial. Studiu de caz: Banca <Albina> din Sibiu (1914-1919)”, in *Primul Război Mondial. Perspectivă istorică și istoriografică*, ed. Ioan Bolovan, Gheorghe Cojocaru, Oana Mihaela Tamaș (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Centrul de Studii Transilvane Academia Română, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2015), 479-481, 483.

The political insecurity existing in the 1916-1917 winter, the peril of Moldova's occupation by its German and Austro-Hungarian enemies, determined the Cosma family (Partenie, Maria – his wife, Hortensia – their daughter) to start the long and dangerous journey towards Western Europe, through Bessarabia, Russia, Norway, England, France – Italy being the end point of their journey – until the 1919 autumn when they returned to Sibiu, in the united and victorious Romania.

Form the correspondence of Hortensia Cosma-Goga – as much as it has been preserved – with her husband who had remained in Iași, and then went to Paris as a member of the “Romanian National Committee”, we find interesting details about the tsarist Russia, about the February 1917 Russian revolution, about the perils of crossing the Baltic Sea towards Norway, about the realities in Italy in the 1917-1919 with a special reference to the Romanian community in the Peninsula (Romanian prisoners from the Austro-Hungarian army, Romanians from the Romanian Kingdom who had found refuge in Italy), about the impact of the power games of our allies over Romania, as they were received by Hortensia, etc.⁵

Hortensia Goga did not date the great majority of her letter. Moreover, the postal stamp for the letter's departure or arrival in Iași is either missing or is hard to decipher. Some letters were sent through the official couriers of the Romanian Consulates in Odessa and Moscow or of the Legation in Petrograd. For all these reasons, it is quite difficult to establish, on exact days and months, the journey made by the Cosmas to Italy. However, the correspondence can offer us not only information on the medical condition of Maria and Partenie Cosma, but also interesting data on the daily realities in a Russia marked by the February 1917 Revolution (the regime of railway transportation, the food crisis and their exorbitant price; the lack of accommodation; the harsh climate specific to the well-known Russian winter; the danger of becoming the target for thieves and smugglers whose activity was favoured by the political and administrative chaos; the reciprocal support of the Romanian, English or American refugees that had been scattered around Russia because of the troubled times; the generosity of Russian commoners). Of particular interest are the data offered regarding the members of the Romanian diplomatic office in Petrograd; the meetings with a series of Romanian cultural and political personalities from Russia on their journey to Western Europe; information on the Romanian prisoners from the Austro-Hungarian army sent to the Kiev area and to Siberia; the effect of the articles published in the “*România*” newspaper in Iași, edited by Octavian Goga, on the Romanian refugees to Russia; the crossing of the Baltic Sea towards Norway; the daily life in Cristianja (Oslo a.n.); the journey to Italy.

The Cosma family left Iași sometime in January 1917. A first stage of the Russian journey was on the route: Ungheni-Chișinău. They made the trip together with

5. See the correspondence kept with the *Octavian Goga Holding*, in the Manuscript Section of the Romanian Academy's Library in Bucharest.

a group of Romanian members of the parliament. In the Chişinău railway station, the prefect of the tsarist Police, members of the Romanian Consulate, an officer representing the local governor were waiting for them. The members of the parliament were boarded for Cherson, the other Romanians who had “little money” were temporarily established in a Jewish sanatorium requisitioned by the Russian authorities. What impressed Hortensia Goga the most during the crossing of Russia from south to north was that on the platform of each railway station there was “hot water... And there were always people with a teapot to take it [for tea a.n.]”. She notices that in Chişinău “life seems to be bearable, but no one should come here if they have not been smugglers, otherwise they will lose everything they have in a week”; in what accommodation is concerned she says “it’s a rip off, they ask you for 15 roubles per person and the house has not been heated for three days”⁶.

In her next letter, which was apparently sent from Chişinău as well, given the material difficulties they were facing with, in an overpopulated city, with a rough administration, to the limit of chaos, Hortensia writes: “Don’t send anyone here anymore, they should go directly to Petrograd, who wants to go further and the poor should stay at home or they should move to a smaller town, such as Roman, where life is bearable. Do not advise people to leave the country, or they will die travelling. You should see the situation at the consulate, a room full of unemployed people”. Among other acquaintances, she meets Vasile Stroescu, the well-known patron of the arts, whom she finds in less favourable moods: “Stroescu is healthy and content, just like you know him. He has no worries and he seems not to be preoccupied by anything except his own person”⁷.

On 9th February 1917, the Cosmas had already been in Petrograd for one week. They arrived there by train on the route Bender (Tighina – a.n.) – Odessa. In the Russian harbour at the Black Sea, the Cosmas remained for a few days. This interruption was caused by the fact that Maria and Partenie fell sick and were hospitalized in a sanatorium⁸. When they resumed the journey, Hortensia was impressed by the monotony of the landscape and by the immensity of the low populated Russian Field: “Here and there a few houses, factories, a small town, a fir tree grove, then again a field covered in snow, wind mills, five, six, eight in one place...”⁹.

Our travellers arrived in the city on the Neva River before the day Partenie Cosma turned 80 (born on 31st January 1837 according to the Gregorian calendar, i.e. on 30th January 1917). It was very hard for them to find accommodation in the city. It was through the benevolence of an Englishman (Waltuck – a.n.), who

6. Romanian Academy’s Library, Manuscript Section, *Octavian Goga Holding* (hereinafter named BAR-FOG), call number S 11(55)/CDLXXXVIII.

7. BAR-FOG, S 11(56)/CDLXXXVIII.

8. BAR-FOG, S 11(58)/CDLXXXVIII.

9. BAR-FOG, S 11(57)/CDLXXXVIII.

had lived in Romania, that they managed to, after one night spent in the waiting room of the railway station. Hortensia met Constantin Diamandy, Ambassador of Romania to Petrograd, who advised her not to insist on leaving Russia for Norway to soon as, during the past ten days, the German military marine had torpedoed 46 ships, being extremely active in the Baltic Sea¹⁰. Knowing Octavian Goga's political efforts, the Ambassador told him that "he can't see any possibility in bringing the Transylvanians from Siberia (i.e. the Romanian prisoners in the Austro-Hungarian army captured on the battlefield in Galicia – a.n.), because they are used (by the Russians – a.n.) as low-paid workers and since there's a lack of workforce (male workforce – a.n.) here, they will not be set free". Hortensia Goga concluded that Russia's decision, our ally, was "an injustice however". In the end, from the letter one can feel a moment of emotional depression when she writes: "I am driven crazy by all these (the burdens she faced – a.n.), I don't know why I left, we all don't know why we moved around the country and little do we know what we are going to do from now on... To those back home ... tell them to be happy they have a home, even if unheated, and that they can stay in *their* country (underlined in the text – a.n.)."¹¹

In another letter written on a sheet of paper bearing the header of the Select Hotel, in Petrograd, 44 Ligovskaya St., on Sunday (?), sometime at the end of March 1917¹², many references were made to the content of a set of copies of the *România* newspaper, published in Iași, sent to the Legation of our country to Petersburg, as well as to the readers' reaction to their patriotic and optimistic content. "I haven't written to you about the newspaper, how much joy it brought us, the emotions I felt reading your articles first, then the Queen's, and then <our> dear newspaper. You should know I was the first to read it, I had cried because of your letter, soon after my return from the Legation... You know what 23 copies of a Romanian journal meant to me and to all of us, after such a long break and being so far away from our oppressed country. You should not wonder that the eyes that have read you were blurry and that our voices prevented us from reading everything, only a few lines... May God protect your gift and help you be able to share with our men on the battlefield everything that your pure soul wants to give them, and the only comfort I find now is what you write to me about your newspaper. You have an occupation that gives you satisfaction in these miserable times, such luck for you, my dear. What would you do without it? ... So admirable the Queen (Maria

10. In January 1917, Germany decides to launch the unlimited submarine war according to Lucian Boia, *Primul Război Mondial. Controverse, paradoxuri, reinterpretări* (București: Humanitas, 2014), 9.

11. BAR-FOG, S 11(57)/CDLXXXVIII.

12. BAR-FOG, S 11(58)/CDLXXXVIII. At a certain point in the letter, the following remark is made: "Here (in Petrograd – a.n.) it's been two days since the cold relented. Yesterday it seemed to melt down (the snow – a.n.), but it froze again. Winter is as long as May, there is still one month and a half left!". Therefore, the letter could have been written in middle of June 1917.

– a.n.) is, how she opened her soul as a rosebud after a summer rain... The newspapers were passed on, they're at the Englishmen now, those who used to live across on Popa Soare (a street in Bucharest – a.n.). Poor Father read them thoroughly, one at a time. So happy he was and oh, how he awaits a new transport"¹³.

Hortensia tried to find the means to support the propaganda for the Romanians' union even in her harsh condition of immigrant. In the same letter, she asked her husband to send to Waltuck, the Englishman in Petrograd, through Romania's Legation in the capital of Russia, the "România" newspaper to popularize a series of articles in the English press. "The Englishman is asking you to mark the articles you consider as being appropriate to be sent". She saw Waltuck as a "nice man, in love with Romania"¹⁴. On the same direction of serving the national interest, Hortensia asked Tavi (Octavian Goga – a.n.): "How about our prisoners? The poor officers are waiting for you near Kiev. Do you know how impatiently they are waiting and no news is sent to them?"¹⁵

Hortensia described to her husband the financial shame she had reached due to the price explosion from one day to another: "You can imagine how expensive life in Petrograd has been. Imagine us, who left to live cheaply in Italy, to stop in the most expensive city in Europe. I believe there is no exaggeration in what is said about the prices here. There is everything, except bread and sugar, but how expensive they are! You know we did not leave rich, but now there's a big hole in our pocket and the trip doubled its price. What can we do? We have to move on. We cannot stay here and who knows who else is going to come (an exceptional intuition based on the chaos generated by the Tsar's disembarkment from the head of the Russian state in February 1917, which facilitated the Bolshevik Revolution of October/November 1917 – a.n.)"¹⁶. Given this financial situation, she asked Octavian Goga to intervene in order to have her father's pension for 1916 sent, through Take Ionescu, through a cheque to Credit Lyonnais.¹⁷

13. BAR-FOG.

14. BAR-FOG

15. BAR-FOG. It's the first set of Transylvanian Romanians who fell prisoners to the Russians on the battlefield in Galicia, received in Iași on 8th June 1917. There were 1 500 officers and soldiers, under the leadership of Victor Deleu, who will make an oath for Romania and for the ideal of uniting all Romanians into one state, according to Ștefan Pascu *Marea Adunare Națională de la Alba Iulia încununarea ideii, a tendințelor și a luptelor de unitate a poporului roman* (Cluj Napoca: Ed. Universității „Babeș-Bolyai” din Cluj, 1968), 276.

16. BAR-FOG, call number S 11(58)/CDLXXXVIII.

17. BAR-FOG. Hortensia Goga did not know that the "Albina" Bank in Sibiu was forced to stop making payments to its clerks from Romania in 1915-1916. In December 1918, this decision imposed by the Austro-Hungarian state was reassessed. See the National Archives – the Sibiu County Office, *Fond Banca Albina*, volume XX, year 1916, Concluz nr. 1/157, 15/171; volume XXI, year 1918, Concluz nr. 205, 220; the National Archives – the Brașov County Office, *Fond 145 parcel 49-52*, file 52, year 1918, ff. 114-116.

At the Legation of Romania to Petrograd, Hortensia met George Enescu, who gave a performance playing works of Beethoven, Grieg, and other Romanian songs. She also met Crețianu – the Romanian Ambassador to Madrid. Data are offered about interesting persons in the Romanian emigration (for instance, about Henegariu of Lancrăm – a typesetter and zincographer, or about Vasile Vasilievici Janorosky of Chișinău), considered to be patriots willing to support the national cause.

The Russian society at that moment is radiographed and described with piercing eyes and a lot of talent, being placed somewhere between reality and bigotry. On a background of “relative peace, everybody is waiting to see where the Germans will try to break the front. We are low on munition and the marine. They (the revolutionaries – a.n.) killed the admiral in Kronstadt, the officers in Sevastopol. Wessolkine barricaded himself and is still hanging on. They unburied Rasputin to make sure he was dead and under his beard they found a small icon from Alex (andra) Feodorovna (the spouse of Tsar Nicholas II) signed by all princesses (the Tsarina’s daughters – a.n.). It seems they have found letters extremely compromising for the Tsarina, and no one knows what the people will do when they get angry again”.¹⁸

In a reply to one of Octavian Goga’s letters, Hortensia wrote, in the same long epistle sent from the Hotel Select, encouraging him in his patriotic activity he had been carrying out in Iași: “It’s as if you grew old, my dear. You make me cry. Don’t give up, Vic (one of the names she used for Octavian Goga – a.n.), don’t give up, save me a small part of your infant child and you’ll see how the light of peace and contentment will reveal itself again”¹⁹.

We do not know exactly when the Partenie Cosma family left Petrograd and Russia to travel towards Norway. Five postcards have been kept. They were sent to Iași from three Scandinavian towns. The first one is Haparanda²⁰, a harbour in the extreme east of the Baltic Sea, a border point between Sweden and the Finnish territory, at that time a part of the Tsarist Russia. One can therefore deduce that the trip from Petrograd to Haparanda was made by boat. Hammerfest²¹ is a harbour-town placed in one of the northern fjords of Norway. From this point, on 24th April 1917, the Cosmas travelled by a “special train to Bergen”²² where they would embark for Kristianja (Oslo – a.n.). From the capital of Norway, Hortensia made the following remark on a postcard: “You should see here how nice people are and what an orderly life they live. If ... they and their neighbours join the

18. BAR-FOG

19. BAR-FOG

20. BAR-FOG, S 11(63)/CDLXXXVIII. Here, Hortensia wrote: “We’ve crossed customs, rocks and waters. One more border between us”.

21. BAR-FOG, S 11(64)/CDLXXXVIII. The text says: “Now I’m told we are leaving tonight at 21:00”.

22. BAR-FOG, S 11(62)/CDLXXXVIII.

alliance (the Scandinavian countries were neutral – a.n.), they will have to be on our side (with the Entente – a.n.)”²³. In another letter sent from Kristianja, bearing the stamp of arrival of the post in Iași on 3rd June 1917, Octavian Goga keeps abreast of the avatars of the journey towards the west made by the family of his father-in-law: “We didn’t leave last night (to England – a.n.), we don’t know why, it seems there was too much talking in the city. The Italians (passengers – a.n.) had a party and now everyone knows there’s a ship leaving at sea. We will be escorted by torpedo boats... all allies are repatriating their subjects. We are no longer refugees, but emigrants. In London and Paris I’ll be waiting for your news, don’t forget about that...”²⁴

In the autumn of 1917, the Cosma family reached Italy. Given his old age (80 years), Partenie Cosma and his wife bore quite well the long and tiring journey made in times of war. It seems the journey from Norway to Italy was made through London and Paris²⁵.



The Italian stage in the emigration of Partenie Cosma’s family includes much more details in the correspondence between Hortensia and Octavian Goga. Apart from the fact that it covers a much wider period of time (summer of 1917 – summer of 1919), the problems the Romanians in Italy were facing with, both the prisoners in the former Austro-Hungarian army and the refugees from the Kingdom of United Romania, are complex, in a continuous change, having surprising solutions. The details of this correspondence and its placement in the context of the evolution of the political and diplomatic life of the Entente and of Europe at that time will be the object of another study.

23. BAR-FOG, S 11(65)/CDLXXXVIII.

24. BAR-FOG, S 11(66)/CDLXXXVIII.

25. BAR-FOG, S 11(69)/CDLXXXVIII. A letter from Paris, bearing the header of the Majestic Hotel, sent to Octavian Goga in Romania through the “new foreign affairs minister”.

TRANSYLVANIA AND BANAT IN THE AUTUMN AND WINTER OF 1918

“The Revolutionary Violence” As Reflected in Memoirs

MIHAI-OCTAVIAN GROZA

Abstract

The end of the Great War, the fall of the war fronts and the collapse of the multinational empires were accompanied by a series of violent anarchic protests, political or social movements, robberies, murders, etc., which later, during the interwar period, will give rise to the so-called “paramilitary violence”. At the end of the war, in the context of the fall of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the Romanians from Transylvania and Banat directly experienced the feeling of imperial collapse and the end of inequalities, feelings that were highlighted through numerous memoirs. Throughout the years of the war, the lack of requisitions, the famine, the shortages of all kinds demoralized the population, to whom the end of the military conflict brought the promise of a better future. The enthusiasm of the population soon turned into a long line of violence and devastation, the arson of the properties of the noble Hungarian families, followed by the most heinous crimes that mainly targeted local notaries and gendarmes, who were seen as symbols of the former regime. From this perspective, this article represents a brief introduction to a subject less debated in the Romanian historiography, that of “the revolutionary violence”, the tense atmosphere in Transylvania and Banat in the autumn and winter of 1918, while trying to capture the shapes of these anarchic and violent demonstrations, as well as their evolution up to the formation of the new Romanian state organizations.

Keywords

Transylvania, Banat, 1918, memoirs, revolutionary violence, anarchy

FOR CENTRAL and South-Eastern Europe the year 1918 represented the year of the great collapses, i.e. the disintegration of the multinational empires, but it was also the year of the great fulfilments: on the ruins of the moribund empires were founded new national states, new political formations and organisms (Czechoslovakia, the Serb-Croato-Slovenian Reign, Poland, Austria, Hungary, and Romania). In the majority of cases, the emergence of the national states was preceded by a wave of violence that marked the future evolution of the new states, as well as the relations between them. This aggressive manifestation was explained by various specialists through the absence of a functional state apparatus at the end of the First World War and through the violence accumulated during the development of the conflict¹. Taking as a starting point these considerations with ascertaining value, our research aims to outline, from the perspective of the cultural history, the forms of violent manifestation specific to the Romanians living in Transylvania and Banat in the context of the outburst of the revolution in the whole Austro-Hungarian Empire, to build a typology of these violent reactions (the soldiers' violence, the popular violence), having as main documentary sources a large number of memorialist texts identified in the collections dedicated to the memory of the war or in the pages of different local monographies illustrating the testimonies of the direct participants to the events mentioned above.

The collapse of the fronts, the disintegration of the army and of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the vacuum of power created, as well as the miseries of all types, the discontents, the frustrations accumulated during the four years of war constituted the major causes of the violent outbreak in the autumn and winter of the year 1918, to all these being added the strong epidemic of Spanish flu, that in many territories provoked more victims than the war itself. Even though the Romanian historiography assigned to the events that accompanied the decline of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy terms such as "revolutionary movements", "riots", "rebellions", "revolution" or "revolutionary actions"², the collective memory labelled the incidents from autumn and winter of the year 1918 from Transylvania and Banat as "revolution", this being the contemporary conception about the events that were devolving, "[...] after the canons imposed by a secular history"³. Personally, we tend to choose the term "revolution", if we take into

1. For an analysis of the violent behavior in the context of the collapse of the great empires at the end of World War I, see: Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East (1914-1923)* (London: Routledge, 2005); Robert Gerwarth, "The Central European Counter-Revolution. Paramilitary Violence in Germany, Austria and Hungary after the Great War", *Past and Present* 200 (2008): 175-209; Robert Gerwarth, John Horne, "Para militarism in Europe after the Great War. An introduction", in *War in Peace. Paramilitary Violence in Europe, after the Great War*, ed. Robert Gerwarth (John Horne: Oxford, 2012).
2. Eugenia Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale asupra Primului Război Mondial* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Argonaut, 2004), 261-266 (hereinafter *Perspectiva lumii rurale asupra Primului Război Mondial*).

account the fact that soon after the movements from autumn and winter of the year 1918 a fundamental transformation within the power structure took place in Transylvania and Banat, the old Austro-Hungarian authorities being forcibly caught and obliged to depose their mandate, the lack of power being substituted by the new Romanian national organisms (the national councils and guards).

According to the opinion of the famous French historian Michel Vovelle, with-in each democratic revolution, during its first phase one can distinguish two levels of manifestation of the revolutionary spirit: the popular level, which is a peasantry, violent one, and the elitist, political level⁴. In what regards the popular, violent level, on which we intend to insist during our approach, one must bring into spotlight the archaic barbarian behaviours, that disappeared from the European space and that remind us of the violent medieval riots against the authorities or the powerful seniors. In the case of Transylvania and Banat, the manifestations scored in the first phase of the revolution, beginning with October and during the whole month of November 1918, were characterized by violence, anarchy, crimes and were favoured by the lack of authority caused by the fall of the Austro-Hungarian state apparatus. The motivations of these manifestations were of economic nature (the decline of productivity, the poor harvests, the diminishment of salaries, the depreciation of the currency), of political (the disintegration of the dualist monarchy), military (the collapse of the fronts, the decline of the Austro-Hungarian army and the return of the soldiers), social (the food crisis, the enriched people of the war), medical (the epidemic of the Spanish flu) and of ideological nature (the advance of the Bolshevik ideas)⁵. These realities are emphasized by the memorialist texts analysed within our research: “the revolution had started, as a consequence of the general misery from our country and also of the defeats suffered by the Austro-Hungarian army on all the fronts”⁶.

3. Valeriu Leu, Carmen Albert, *Banatul în memorialistica “măruntă” sau istoria ignorată (1914-1919)* (Reșița: Muzeul de Istorie al Județului Caraș-Severin, 1995), 62, 93.
4. Michel Vovelle, *La mentalité révolutionnaire. Société et mentalités sous la Révolution française* (Paris: Messidor, Éditions sociales, 1985), 19; although Michel Vovelle is known as a Marxist and one of the French Communist Party's last prominent intellectuals, his theory can be applied to the Romanian history, where all revolutionary events are accompanied by this popular, violent plan (for more details see: Florin Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră a poporului roman* (Bucharest: Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 2011), 202.
5. Alan John Percivale Taylor, *Monarhia habsburgică (1809-1918). O istorie a Imperiului Habsburgic și a Austro-Ungariei* (Bucharest: Editura Allfa, 2000), 209; Jean Béranger, *Istoria Imperiului Habsburgilor (1273-1918)*, (Bucharest: Editura Universitas, 2000), 497 (hereinafter *Istoria Imperiului Habsburgilor*).
6. Eftimie Gherman, “Memorii” in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, eds. Valeriu Leu, Nicolae Bocșan and Mihaela Bedecan, vol. III (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană/Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2015), 156 (hereinafter *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană*).

In Transylvania and Banat, in the context of the dissatisfactions generated by the war, of numerous requisitions and war loans, of the inequalities committed by the local authorities, and also of the discriminating treatment suffered by the families of those who were fighting on the front, by the middle of October 1918 among the population the agitation had already begun to spread, the first who expressed their discontent being the soldiers, those who were also the most affected by the despair of the war⁷. The war, the political regime and the government of the imperial army became responsible for the desolation that all the population was suffering from, while the soldiers, up to then loyal, were no longer willing to support a regime that brought them to such a catastrophe, provoking numerous human and material losses⁸.

The first form of violent manifestation belonging to the soldiers and identified by the memorialist texts was illustrated by the refusal to submit to the military commands and by the symbolic degradation of the superior officers: “[...] there were soldiers that had the weird predilection of entertaining themselves with the officers’ degradation they met on the street. They smashed their stars and the rosette and caught them thirstily under the scratched shoes”⁹. This was one of the forms of revenge through which “they perhaps expressed all the sadness of the years of war that were full of sufferings”¹⁰, against those who took them during the war and obliged them to sacrifice themselves for an alien cause. The “stars” and the “rosette” represented the symbols of the imperial army, their simple exposure generating the fury of the soldiers, illustrative being the evidence of captain Traian Popa from the 64 Infantry Regiment, Orăștie: “[...] a vehicle in which there was a general in uniform was stopped [...] and how the cap blew away from his head after being hit by these people. I understood quite immediately the reason, poor general, Kaiser true, still had the imperial cockade at his cap”¹¹.

The refusal to obey the military demands, and the degradation of the officers were accompanied by the regiments’ devastation of the stocks and by the soldiers’ return home. The same captain, Traian Popa, narrated the following episode:

“[...] at the door we met a gypsy, pardon me, a rom, from now on [...] dressed tip, top in the peace uniform, with the pants closed on the feet, with the yel-

7. Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *Războiul redescoperit (1914-1918)*, trans. Cristina Popescu and Elena-Tudora Duță (Bucharest: Editura Corint, 2014), 65.

8. Jean Béranger, *Istoria Imperiului Habsburgilor*, 499.

9. N. Linția, “O generație privilegiată. Modestă contribuție la cea mai luminoasă pagină din istoria neamului nostru. Unirea cea Mare 1918”, in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană*, III, 368.

10. N. Linția, O generație privilegiată.

11. Traian Popa, “Revoluția din 1918 la Viena”, in *Senatul Militar Român Central al Ofițerilor și Soldaților din Viena (31 octombrie-27 noiembrie 1918)*, edition, notes and introductory study by Mihai-Octavian Groza (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Argonaut, 2015), 81.

low-black chord at feather and with the weaving in *vitez-kötes* at the pockets, on the head the terrible *csako*, and on his back a packed haversack. We called him on the carpet, flattering him how handsome he was and asking him where he had the effects from and where he was going. It is revolution, sir, do you know what a revolution is? We do not have an emperor any more, we do not have a government, and we are free. The effects we have found in the stocks that we broke into. For four years you have been dressing us patchy and dingy and the stocks have been always full¹².

The memorialist texts also depicted the image of the crowded trains that transported the soldiers on their way home, the path of return being a real spectacle consisting in acts of vandalism, verbal violence and obscene manifestations, the testimony of Lucian Blaga being more than illustrative:

“After a couple of minutes, the train was assaulted by the soldiers that arrived on that moment from the front, equipped with all their things. Screaming could be heard in all the languages of the monarchy. There could be heard in particular the Hungarian exclamation: *Viva the Hungarian Republic!* The echoes of the hunger for freedom, with steep accents, were being multiplied passing from one coach to another. The train finally departed, straining under the heaviness of a fragment of fallen front [...] the soldiers woke from the strong roaring of the night and came back slowly in their role of freedom protagonists. They were shooting from the windows, just like playing, having a random goal, in the air or on the camp. Through the stations, the eye noticed, from the beat of the train, devastated stocks [...] in the coach we were suffocating in the crowd that did not want to move away. The soldiers, fixed on their places, were urinating on the window, joking from a ballistic point of view¹³.

Once returned home and becoming conscious of their families' situation, in most of the cases, impoverished by the numerous war requisitions, the soldiers confronted themselves with the symbolism that evoked the ex-empire and with its political and military representatives¹⁴: “[...] those who returned home and committed to plundering, being still in the garrison came armed with pistols, grenades and even machine-guns, devastating all during their journey on train, despoiling trains and merchandise coaches. The approach of the soldiers spread horror

12. Traian Popa, *Revoluția din 1918*, 92.

13. Lucian Blaga, *Hronicul și cântecul vârstelor*, ed. Dorli Blaga (Bucharest: Editura Humanitas, 2012) 233-235 (hereinafter *Hronicul și cântecul vârstelor*).

14. Valeriu Leu, Nicolae Bocșan and Mihaela Bedecian, “Memorialiști români din Banat despre Marele Război”, in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană*, volume III, 80.

through the villages they arrived in. They scared in particular the boyars' courts and last but not the least, they also scared the notaries and the other employees"¹⁵.

The outbreak of the revolution in the autumn of 1918, the soldiers' return from the military fronts, sodden during the evolution of the war and radicalized by their poor families' situation, gave birth to violent revolutionary manifestations, specific to the popular traditional violence. Due to a phenomenon of mental contagion, the events happened quite similarly from one zone to another, from a locality to another, the scenes varying slightly. In fact, we talk about a conflict of the population with the local authorities and with all the rich people of the villages, from landlords to rich peasants, the victims being first of all the rural notaries (regarded as responsible for the requisitions), the gendarmes, and the landowners, and in some cases the masters that belonged to the commissions of requisitions¹⁶.

In the devolvement of the events, the bishop of Oradea, Roman Ciorogariu, emphasized the active role of women, who, as a result of their wish to revenge against those who provoked them unpleasant situations during war, incited their husbands once returned from the front to violence: "[...] here the major role in these revenging acts was assumed by women who lamented themselves to their husbands returned from the front about the inequalities suffered in their absence. And these men, furious because of what they heard from their wives, were trying to capture those who had made the inequalities"¹⁷.

The imperial symbols, made visible in public places or on the frontons of the most important state institutions, were the first which met the popular fury, these being destructed or incinerated¹⁸, illustrative being the indications of the Banatian Pavel Jumanca, who in his memories wrote the following: "[...] the statue of the emperor Franz Josef I, situated at the margin of the park was made in bronze and could not be damaged. It was, however, splashed with clay and garbage, but it remained unbroken [...] children and young people from all the social categories brought binders, chained them at the neck of the statue and backed it up in front, the face made in bronze of the old imbecile that ruled over the Austrian monarchy from disaster to disaster until its total disintegration"¹⁹.

The violent acts continued with the regain of the confiscated goods by the army, with the attacks on the food stocks that were under the authority of the notaries, these exerting a great fascination since so many aliments were deposited there. As

15. ***, "Jafuri și distrugeri", *Unirea* 69 year XXVIII (9 noiembrie 1918) 3.

16. E. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale asupra Primului Război Mondial*, 266-273.

17. Roman Ciorogariu, *Zile trăite* (Oradea: Tipografia Diecezană, 1926), 157.

18. Andreea Dăncilă Ineoan, "Memoria războiului și a revoluției în Bistrița-Năsăud", in *Primul Război Mondial. Perspectivă istorică și istoriografică*, eds. I. Bolovan, Gh. Cojocaru, O. M. Tămaș, (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane/Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2015), 507 (hereinafter "Memoria războiului și a revoluției în Bistrița-Năsăud").

19. *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană, volume II, Memoriile lui Pavel Jumanca*, 626.

such, the revolutionary actions began with the assaults against the notaries, the inhabitants of the villages and of the communes asking for a division of the alimments, for the opening of the cereal crops deposits, and also for them to respond for the distribution of the war aids, then continued with the robberies, the maltreating of the public officials, their relegation and rarely with their killing, even if not all the notaries had behaved like beasts during war time²⁰. In what regards the violence directed against the notaries, Nicolae Badiu, in his memories, wrote the following lines:

“[...] they were shooting down from the windows so, without knowing. Perhaps this was an outburst of the energies accumulated in this type of fierce and wild temperament [...] there was a single word on the lips of everyone: Notaroș! But what did they have against the notary? The fact that this official from the villages represented all the Hungarian cancer came against the Romanians’ and the Serbs’ heads. He executed the orders that were coming from the terrible Tisza Pista, he showed compassion for women, requested the necessary things for the army, wrote down those who had to enrol and finally, the *fălmântăș* (the military dispense) of those who had the right to stay home depended on him. And the notaries, in their large majority Hungarian, in their blind arrogance, did not respect these attributions with dignity. All the sins of the Hungarian governments were paid by these functionaries with their head”²¹.

Another category against which was directed the villagers’ fury was represented by the gendarmes who, in the context of the decline of the central authority, escaped in their large majority before being attacked²²: “[...] the gendarmes who appeared were easily disarmed. There came more people around them, as to say, to explain them the situation and, at a sign, they put their hands on their arms and after a short fight, the gendarmes were not any more. They were pathetic in their escape without arms, with the uncovered head”²³.

The revolutionary actions continued with the attack and the devastation of the large land properties, resulting in the maltreating and killing of the owners, in what regards this phase the memoirs offering hundreds, if not thousands of examples. In the last days of the month of October 1918, the villagers attacked the domain of the big landowners (Hungarian as well as Romanian) and robbed them. If we were to refer to this phase, Nicolae Schiau from Daia, mentioned the fol-

20. E. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 267-270.

21. N. Badiu, “Aduceri aminte”, in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană*, vol. I, 147.

22. E. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 271.

23. David Prodan, *Memorii*, text cared and annotated, with a foreword by Aurel Răduțiu (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1993), 34 (hereinafter *Memorii*).

lowing aspects about the attack on the manor house belonging to the landowner Kristof Pongracz:

“[...] my father took the ox-cart and we directed to Valea Oii, where the guards constituted during the night with the armament from the front caught the owners. The barns and the stocks were burning. Half of the village was there, each person was taking what could be taken away. We took beams that after years and years we used for the construction of the new hayloft. Big fires were burning in different parts; calves were being roasted. The manor house from Curte was devastated by those from Mândra (a part of the village). It was smaller... It is said that, in their fury, the villagers also took the napkins of the manor house administrator's child, a so-called Zall”²⁴.

The assault against the noble manor house and against the lands was accompanied by the robberies and the public humiliation of the owners by the revolutionary population, the historian David Prodan offering such an example:

“[...] the authorities in the village were only the notary and the gendarmes, while the landowner Barcsay Gabor, from the great family Barcsay that also gave a Prince [...] they did not kill Barcsay because they considered him a good man, that did not maltreat anyone, that did not harm anyone, that did not do an inequality [...] it was just in the moment when the people were coming from church. Taking into account the fact that here also began the devastation, they assaulted the court, they started the fate [...] the old Barcsay, sitting on an armchair, had to look with his own eyes the disaster [...] he did not remain for long time, a peasant apostrophized him: ‘stand up now, will you, because you stayed enough, it's time for me to stay as well’. And he carried away the armchair from the nobleman. After having promised that he would pay them a nice sum of money, two peasants put him on the carriage full of straw, covered him with a sheepskin coat and went together to Vinț. Poor of him, was suffocating under the sheepskin coat, but it was better like this. On the road the peasants stopped two times: «we do not go further if you do not pay us». And he had to promise that he would do so”²⁵.

It is important to mention the fact that these acts of violence and devastation did not exclude the Romanians, in particular the masters who took part in the recruitment or requisition commissions. The croppers, the bargains, the proper-

24. Gheorghe Bica, *Daia Română. Pagini de istorie și civilizație țărănească* (Sebeș: Editura Emma Books, 2011), 306.

25. D. Prodan, *Memorii*, 33-34.

ties of the Romanian banks or of the two Romanian churches were devastated and robbed: “[...] in the village crimes, Romanians – them against them – set fires and spread human hatred. From Progor came the news: the notary was killed. At Moldova-Veche the same notary was killed, at Sasca Montană, the important and peaceful man, Mica Paul, was killed by a Romanian, at Potac the same cruelty with the setting on fire of the master’s house, the unburied cadaver being in the house and other innumerable bestialities of the animal-human being in revolution”²⁶.

This violent behaviour of the population led many times to the sphere of a modern outlawry that justified the shortages from the Romanian Transylvanian and Banatian villages, but also the feeling of forcing a time of social equality²⁷. Characteristic for the cloudy moments, the attacks, the robberies, the devastations and the crimes were accompanied by the destruction of the archival documents, in the case of villages and communes being also destructed a part of the documents situated in the notarial centres and in the town halls, including the school registers and the registry books of civil status²⁸. The lack of authority, created by being caught or being obliged to abandon the office by the Austro-Hungarian authorities, was favourable for the “courageous people after the war”, the opportunist elements from the margin of the society that installed in the first line²⁹, reliable being the examples given by Lucian Blaga, who, in his memories, rememorized the robberies of the houses, of the cellars and of the deposits belonging to the Saxon community from Sebeş by such elements:

“[...] going down in the cellars without bottom, they drank further, in the depravation of the drunkenness, the carbines were almost coughing it up by in the vine barrels. The vine was gurgling, inundating the sandy bottom of the cellars [...] and there were the people coming with their carriages, as on a market day and cankering without stop, they charged almost all that was to be taken from the cellars, they emptied the alehouse, they emptied the ten rooms of abundance of the bargainer. Once that from what was moving it did not remain anything, the people began taking the windows, the doors, the stove and the floors”³⁰.

According to Eugenia Bârlea’s opinion, one of the most important frameworks for the outburst of the robberies were the markets, which summed together hundreds of people coming from many localities, discontent people, quarrelling ones,

26. Mihai Groșșianu, “Revoluția anului 1918 din Oravița-Caraș. Proclamația reîntregirii națiunii române. Oravița, la 4 noiembrie 1918”, in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană*, vol. III, 194.

27. Andreea Dăncilă Ineoan, “Memoria războiului și a revoluției în Bistrița-Năsăud”, 508.

28. E. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale asupra Primului Război Mondial*, 275.

29. E. Bârlea, *Perspectiva*, 275.

30. Lucian Blaga, *Hronicul și cântecul vârstelor*, 237-238.

ready to follow the suggestion and the example of other revolted villages, to rally at the first impulse of robbery. Within the tensioned atmosphere of the autumn of the year 1918, the markets represented real powder kegs, whereas the customary consumption of alcohol, regularly on this occasion, the burning match. It was here that the crowds were coagulating, these becoming hopeful about the force of their number and about their righteousness, here an amorphous mass was transforming itself into a community with a unique aspiration, the intervention of the forces leading many times to real bloodbaths³¹.

The tensions accumulated during the war, the robberies, all the kinds of violence and also the strong epidemics of Spanish flu outburst in the autumn of 1918 “that was haunting furiously all over, sickling millions of victims like the plague from the old times”³², generated a series of practices, under the sign of superstition and uncertainty, deviations that reminded of the medieval period. For example, in the locality of Cut, an estate of the Greek-Catholic Archdiocese of Alba and Făgăraș, the following episode was registered:

“In the state of physical mess, provoked by a destructive war soon finalized and by the painful loses of members of so many families, Cut was not excepted in this period by any event of temporary wandering of the right judgement. It was the case of an old woman, considered to be a ghost and to have brought the epidemics of the Spanish flu in the village. The wandering of the minds soon materialized, considering the exhumation and the burning of the respective dead person as being necessary. Consequently, one cloudy day, a group of villagers began to exhume and to incinerate the person’s corpse. The revolutionary state, with the communal authority suspended, did not make possible the arrival in that place of someone able to see the madness that was devolving. The priest, the relatives of the dead woman or other lucid people did not have the courage to come closer, convinced by the fact that the state of the events was of such nature that one could not expect anything else than violent confrontations that would enlarge even more the sphere of the sufferings”³³.

The memorialist retained another type of violence, the violence of the ex-Austro-Hungarian political and administrative authorities that faced the popular violence with acts of aggression, the most well-known case being the one consumed in the locality Beliș, property of the Urmanczy family. In this locality there was a forestall institution, where during war, the work force was ensured by

31. E. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 275-277.

32. Ioan David, “Amintiri fugare din toamna anului 1918 (însemnările unui student)”, in *Marele Război în memoria bănăţeană*, vol. III, 297.

33. Gheorghe Vasilca, *Satul Cut. Însemnări monografice şi amintiri. Perioada până la întemeierea României Mari, 1918* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Casa Cărţii de Ştiinţă, 2011), 99-100.

the Italian prisoners captured by the Austro-Hungarian army. At the end of the conflict, the Italian prisoners devastated the stocks of the institution and burned them, the gendarmes announcing the Urmanczy family about this incident, the fault being attributed to the Romanians. The baron John Urmanczy organized a military detachment that was sent to the Beliș village to re-establish the peace, the course of events transforming the “peace” into a real bloodbath, with approximately 50 victims, all of them Romanians³⁴. Similar cases were registered by the collective memory in numerous localities (Rusca Montană, Cornea, Domașnea, Teiuș, etc.), where the local population was really terrorized by the actions of the former government: “[...] they terrorized these communes [...] blaming the inhabitants for different facts, most of the faults being however strange to them, *finenții* feeling responsible to judge them and so attacked them”³⁵.

The wave of popular violence diminished at the beginning of the month of November 1918 and was eliminated with the manifestation of the elitist political plan, represented by the constitution of the Romanian National Central Council, of the Romanian national guards and councils as organs meant to maintain the peace and the public security³⁶. Through their foundation, the county, the urban, communal and local councils inaugurated the process of political organization on national basis, constituting the centre of the future Romanian state organization. Substituting or in most of cases subordinating the old political organization, the national councils had the value of real bodies of state authority, bringing their contribution to the welfare of life, to the supply of the population, to the insurance of the communication, of the public security and of the goods of all citizens, independently of their nationality³⁷.

The collective memory of the Romanians from Transylvania and Banat retained the violent manifestation of the population in the autumn and the winter of the year 1918 as a special moment in the national movement, since this represented the taking over of the power by a revolutionary way. The violence found at a popular level represented the first phase of the revolution that manifested itself as a conflict between the soldiers returned from the front, their families and those who were considered guilty by the difficult situation they had to cope with. Far from being complete, our research, based on the analysis of the numerous memorialist texts from Transylvania and Banat, real historical sources to capture the revolutionary violence in the autumn and winter of 1918 proposes a point of view on this phenomenon, with the hope that the modest results we have achieved would be useful for other historian colleagues preoccupied by this period.

34. Aurel Gociman, *Măcelul de la Beliș din 1918* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Clusium, 1995), 16-19.

35. Gheorghe Neamțu, “Activitatea Consiliului Național Român din Caransebeș (noiembrie 1918-august 1919)”, in *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană*, vol. III, 447-448.

36. E. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 284.

37. Nicolae Bocșan, “Rolul consiliilor naționale”, *Steaua. Revistă a Uniunii Scriitorilor* 12 XXXVI (1985): 7.

ORPHANS, WIDOWS AND INVALIDS IN TRANSYLVANIA DURING AND AFTER THE GREAT WAR Statistical Contributions Concerning Bistrița-Năsăud County



IOAN BOLOVAN, ADRIAN ONOFREIU



Abstract

One of the major traumas inflicted by the First World War upon all belligerent states—and one with significant demographic consequences—was the death of many men, which deprived many families of their main income earner. Under these circumstances, the Romanians in Transylvania (and not only them) began to circulate the idea of the responsibility that society should bear for the children left without a father. Thus, in the year 1916, the Romanian elites (both secular and ecclesiastical) initiated a comprehensive campaign in support of the orphans, with far-reaching echoes within a Transylvanian Romanian society eager to become actively involved in solving this demographic and social problem. In early 1916, the Hungarian minister for internal affairs urged all city authorities to set up orphans services tasked with protecting the interests of war orphans (specially appointed inspectors were to monitor the living conditions of orphans, the manner in which their guardians took care of them, etc.). After the union between Transylvania and Romania, the Romanian authorities showed particular interest in the matter, introducing bills and issuing administrative acts concerning those who were to be granted the status of war invalids, orphans, and widows. In our paper we shall present several previously unpublished documents from Bistrița-Năsăud County, concerning both Romanians and Saxons, which outline the statistical and social perspectives on this matter.

Keywords

World War One, Transylvania, orphans, widow, children

ONE OF the most visible consequences of the war on the societal level was the tremendous wave of solidarity and generosity it generated, from its very outbreak, among all the social classes.¹ Both the lay authorities and the leaders of all the religious denominations in the belligerent countries became involved in a huge effort to assist those affected by the horrors of the war, supporting the families whose men were on the battlefield or reiterating the need for social solidarity in circulars, sermons and articles in the press, both secular and ecclesiastical.² On 21 July 1914, the Orthodox Metropolitan Ioan Mețianu sent a circular letter by which he intended to boost donations from the faithful in order to support orphans and families that had difficulty maintaining themselves. The priests were demanded to urge the people, during every Sunday sermon, to raise funds for the soldiers, but also to help those without food, the sick, the lonely, etc. He himself contributed with a sum of 1,000 Kronen and expected that his example should be followed by as many members of the clergy as possible. Beyond the importance of financial support, Mețianu underscored the imperative need for community service. In particular, he referred to agricultural production, as the crops could no longer be harvested, given the departure of the men to the front. Thus, the clergy were advised to contact the town halls and draft a harvesting plan, together with the authorities, for each of the parishes.³ The article “Războiul” [“The War”], printed in the religious publication *Biserica și Școala* [*The Church and the School*], edited by the Orthodox Diocese of Arad, showed that “it is high time for Christian charity. Just like the motto of those who are taken to war is: one for all and all for one, let this be also the watchword of those left at home: one for all and all for one, let us all rush to help them.”⁴

In 1915, the Ministry of Agriculture required that farming the fields should progress despite the war, invoking the example of the populations in the Balkans that had not abandoned husbandry during the war. It founded a county-level Committee on Agriculture which was to coordinate agricultural works and assist the elderly, the women and the children, where possible, with farm machinery.⁵ Also, in order to streamline agricultural work under the conditions of war, the State decided to increase the number of working days by including Sundays and

1. For this global problem, see, among others, the book of Bruno Cabanos, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism, 1918-1924* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 4 sq. A few excerpts from the following pages have already been published, in almost identical form, in the book of Ioan Bolovan, *Primul Război Mondial și realitățile demografice din Transilvania. Familie, moralitate și raporturi de gen* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Școala Ardeleană, 2015), 125-133.
2. See, for instance, the article “Văduve și orfani”, *Unirea*, XXVII, 71 (24 November 1917).
3. Florin Bengean, *Filantropie și asistență socială în activitatea Bisericii Ortodoxe Române din Transilvania în perioada 1868-1918*, 252 sq.
4. *Biserica și Școala*, XXXVIII, 31 (3/16 August 1914): 269.
5. Bistrița County Branch of the National Archives, Fund: *The Archiud Greek-Catholic Parish Office*, file 6/1913-1917, f. 118v.

some holidays. The two Romanian Churches in Transylvania complied with the Government's decisions. For instance, in March 1915, at the suggestion of the Government, the leadership of the Greek-Catholic Church "absolved" believers from religious injunctions against farming activities on Sundays and public holidays, so that they "could make up for the absence of the precious labor force of those fighting on the battlefield." In October 1915, a new Government circular was issued. It was taken over by the two Churches, which disseminated its message that the population should give a helping hand on the farming fields to the families whose men were away at war. The circular suggested that its provisions were to be extended for the year 1916 too. It insisted that the priests should inform the believers of this dispensation, that the curators should urge farmers against leaving a single meadow or plowing field uncultivated, and that the more well-off believers should help those who were destitute.⁶

The Orthodox and the Greek-Catholic metropolitan circulars continued to deliver consistently the same message regarding donations for those who suffered from the war. Subscription lists were opened in each of the parishes of the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Transylvania. The priests could send the money collected either to the deaneries or, directly, to the Archdiocesan Consistory. For example, the priest from Ciceu-Giurgești informed the Consistory in August 1915 that 21 Kronen had been collected from his parish.⁷ Following the model of Metropolitan Mețianu's circular, Ioan I. Papp, the Orthodox Bishop of Arad, recommended on 1/14 September 1914 that the priests in the diocese should "compel the parishioners to have fewer guests at the feasts" celebrating christenings and weddings. The money saved through these less exorbitant parties was to be donated to the less affluent families that could not support themselves because of the men's departure for the front.⁸ Several issues of the official review edited by the Diocese of Arad published calls to charity, so that the indigent population could overcome more easily the hardships of war. The exhortation of the Bishop of Arad was genuinely compelling in terms of its generosity: "To show true love and care for the families of those taken to the battlefield, it would be desirable that they should be given every support not only with harvesting their crops, but also with making sure that none of the above-mentioned land-owning families fail to sow their fields in autumn."⁹

The appeal made on 25 July/7 August 1914 by Sofia Beleş, the chairwoman of the Romanian Women's Association in Arad, evinced the same spirit, relevant for the humanitarian sentiment whose cultivation was underway in the local society: "Our brave heroes have gone to war to defend our homeland and our

6. Alba County Branch of the National Archives, Library, file no. 2899/1916, III/362, f. 19v.

7. Florin Bengean, *Filantropie și asistență socială în activitatea Bisericii Ortodoxe Române din Transilvania în perioada 1868-1918*, 256.

8. *Biserica și Școala*, XXXVIII, 36 (7/20 September 1914): 307.

9. *Ibidem*, 307.

nation. The families of many of them have been deprived thus of the men's subsistence efforts and will soon be on the verge of utter poverty... Do rush, Romanian women in Arad County, to help the poor! Do inquire, Romanian women in Arad County, about the families of those who were taken to war and give them all your help and all the comfort! Wipe the tears of those who are crying, put clothes on those who are naked, give food to those who are starving!"¹⁰ Also, in the summer of 1916, the local branch of the "Ștefania" Association was founded in Arad, for the protection of mothers and children. In parallel, the initiative of establishing an orphanage for the children of the Romanians who had died on the battlefield was popularized in the local Romanian milieus.¹¹

As it has been pointed out recently, one of the greatest traumas caused by World War I in all the warring states, with serious demographic consequences,¹² was partial or total disability or, worse, the death of many men who left behind countless families without their main provider. In such circumstances, a topic of great concern among the Romanians in Transylvania (but not only) was the responsibility society had for the children who had been orphaned through the demise of their fathers. These concerns and initiatives for finding appropriate humanitarian solutions as regards the orphans of war were registered in almost all the warring countries during those years.¹³ Thus, in 1916 there was a broad campaign initiated by the Romanian elite (both secular and ecclesiastical) in favor of orphans, which had a wide echo among the Romanian society in Transylvania.¹⁴ Launched by the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Sibiu around Christmas Eve in 1915, the building of an orphanage was also embraced in the spring of 1916 by the Uniate (Greek-Catholic) Metropolitanate of Blaj, both of the Romanians' Churches becoming actively involved in addressing this demographic and social problem. Although the idea of constructing orphanages was not a novelty in the Romanian society (the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Sibiu had discussed it in 1912 and the Greek-Catholic Metropolitanate of Blaj had approached it at an even earlier time), re-launching the establishment of these orphanages was consistent with the demand of the civil authorities. In early 1916, Hungary's Interior Minister urged all municipalities to establish orphan protectorates for defending the interests of war orphans

10. *Ibidem*, 31 (3/16 August 1914): 271.

11. DJAAN, FCP, file 358/1916.

12. I. Bolovan, *Primul război mondial și realitățile demografice din Transilvania*.

13. Olivier Faron, *Les enfants du deuil. Orphelins et pupilles de la Nation de la Première Guerre mondiale (1914-1941)* (Paris: La Découverte, 2001): 7.

14. Daniela Mârza, "Demografie și asistență socială în Transilvania (1916-1918): înființarea orfelinelor destinate orfanilor de război" in *Mișcări de populație și aspecte demografice în România în prima jumătate a secolului XX. Lucrările conferinței internaționale "Mișcări de populație în Transilvania în timpul celor două războaie mondiale României," Cluj-Napoca, 24-27 mai 2006*, eds. Sorina Paula Bolovan, Ioan Bolovan, Rudolf Gräf and Corneliu Pădurean (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007), 93.

(special inspectors were to be appointed for overseeing the conditions in which orphans lived, how they were cared for by their guardians, etc.).¹⁵

Regardless of their denominational or social affiliation, the Romanians responded enthusiastically to these calls, the lists of those who contributed to the fundraising initiatives being published regularly in the media (both secular and ecclesiastical – *Telegraful Român*, *Biserica și Școala*, *Unirea*, etc.). Among those who made financial contributions were illustrious figures like Metropolitan Mihaly of Apșa, who donated 20,000 Kronen, Bishop Demetriu Radu, with 40,000 Kronen (for Blaj), Queen Marie of Romania, with 120,000 Kronen (for Sibiu), etc. A symptomatic phenomenon for this trans-confessional mindset was the fact that some made donations to both orphanages, even though there had been tensions and a sense of competition between Sibiu and Blaj.¹⁶ For instance, Teodor Mihali (Chairman of the Romanian Parliamentary Club in Budapest) sent 2,000 Kronen to each of the orphanages. The amounts collected as a result of the charitable action (about 500,000 Kronen in Sibiu, 400,000 Kronen in Blaj) were declared sufficient in the autumn of 1916, but the opening and operation of the orphanages was possible only later, because of the vicissitudes of the war. Nonetheless, financial aid was distributed to the orphans from the amounts collected). The orphanage in Blaj opened its doors on 1 October 1918, initially for 50 children, while the orphanage in Sibiu operated in the buildings of the central school, the intention being to subsequently purchase a building specially intended for this institution.¹⁷

Thus, during those war years, an ample campaign was launched by the lay authorities and by the Romanian elite (both secular and ecclesiastical) in favor of orphans, the idea enjoying broad appreciation at the level of the Romanian Transylvanian society, whose members were keen to actively commit themselves to solving this demographic and social problem. At the beginning of 1916, Hungary's Interior Minister instructed all municipalities to establish local councils for the protection of the war orphans' interests (specially appointed inspectors were to oversee the conditions under which the orphans lived, how they were cared for by their guardians, etc.). After the Union of Transylvania with Romania, the Romanian authorities continued to devote their attention to the orphans' situation, issuing legislative documents that regulated this issue and administrative documents for those who were to benefit from the status of *war invalids*, *orphans* and *widows*. We will examine in this study several documents from the area of Bistrița-Năsăud County, concerning the Romanians and the Saxons alike. These documents outline a statistical and social perspective on this issue.

15. *Ibidem*, 94.

16. *Ibidem*, 96.

17. *Ibidem*, 97.

Lately, a major interest of Romanian historical research has been related to World War I.¹⁸ Regarded in terms of the feedback on European trends, this research direction has even been institutionalized.¹⁹ Of course, for the academic environment, research on the complex phenomena associated with the Great War – the syntagm through which World War I was assumed by its contemporaries – has had notable results so far. These studies, materialized in outstanding works of synthesis, have mainly focused on analyzing the military operations, the involvement of the main combatants, the diplomacy of the period and the consequences of the war. Unquestionably, unpublished documents, numerous still, may shed further light on issues less frequently addressed by Romanian historiography. It is just as true that the attention granted to World War I has been oscillating and that its interpretations have depended on various geopolitical realities and political-ideological climates.

This is also the reason why we will present, in what follows, a set of unpublished documents about the war, covering, in territorial terms, the administrative area of the former *comitat* (county) – and then, after 1918, along the same spatial coordinates, the *județ* (county) of Bistrița-Năsăud. Our analysis takes into account the fact that throughout history, this area has been inhabited by ethnic groups mainly represented by the Romanians and the Saxons. Alongside them, in more modest proportions, there have also lived Hungarians, Roma, Armenians, Jews or various Slavic ethnic groups. Like so many other times in the past, they came face to face with history during the war. Although positioned differently within the province they were part of, Transylvania, their fate was somewhat “leveled” by the consequences of the *Außgelich* of 1867, and in particular, by the legislative regulations of 1876.

It is no wonder then that at the outbreak of the war, in the summer of 1914, the two ethnic groups were equally heavily involved in supporting the human effort of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This was even more visible in the rural areas, where mobilization was greater, at least numerically. In the rural world, people were recruited regardless of ethnicity and suffered the deprivations entailed by their participation in the war, but the dire consequences of the war afflicted also those who had remained at home. These were the descendants of the men mobilized to the battlefield and they were confronted with the need to ensure their livelihood and to maintain the households bereft of the “heads” of the family or the young aides, who had been enlisted to various fronts in Europe.

18. *Primul război mondial. Perspectivă istorică și istoriografică*, eds. Ioan Bolovan, Gheorghe Cojocaru and Oana Mihaela Tămaș (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Academy, Center for Transylvanian Studies, 2015).

19. By establishing a calendar of commemorations for the period 2014-2018. See “Hotărârea Guvernului României no. 24” of 15.01. 2014, *Monitorul Oficial*, 41 (17.01. 2014).

In this regard, it should be noted that testimonies from the period of war and from its aftermath have constantly been at our disposal, from times coeval with the global conflagration to the present day. The fact that they were not known and exploited previously was due to a complex set of circumstances. Of these, we should mention the attitude towards the conflict in different periods subsequent to the events described in the documents, an attitude that was often influenced by political considerations or restrictive legislative regulations. Either due to the intrusion of the political factor, or to an attitude of false “prudery” – since the survivors’ infirmities triggered a peculiar attitudinal conduct, focused on the survivors’ identity as mutilated individuals – in the rural world, and even to the position of religion in society, these documentary testimonies were passed into oblivion. Even today they are not fully known and assumed by historical research.

Therefore, above all, the natural attitude towards this challenge should be that of attempting to understand *why*, *how* and, especially, *where* the rural world has preserved information regarding the theme outlined above.²⁰ We can delineate, first, a category of documents that can be regarded as *official*. Whether they were drawn up by the lay or the ecclesiastical authorities, they record *suffering*, in its sundry aspects.

The chronicles/ ledgers of the parishes are among the most important in this category. Surely, it is easy to see that they belong to the category of *official documents*, given the position of those that compiled/edited them: the clergy. As heads of the rural world, alongside teachers, priests had privileged positions in the Transylvanian rural society during the war. Exempted, in general, from participation in armed warfare as soldiers, they could serve as important witnesses and chroniclers of the facts they experienced, together with their parishioners. Their records – marked by their level of training or their involvement in the lives of the communities they shepherded – amount to genuine “chronicles” of those four years of military conflict. They captured both the suffering of the soldiers directly involved on the military fronts and, especially, of those left behind, on the home front, facing the hardships and the troubles of everyday life, in a real war waged “behind the trenches.”²¹

The second category is that of the documents drawn up by various officials of the Romanian State, after the end of the armed conflict. We should mention here the documents issued for those who were to benefit from the status of *war*

20. For a synthetic approach to the subject, see Eugenia Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale asupra primului război mondial* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2004).

21. See Adrian Onofreiu, “1918-o lume în schimbare,” *Bistrița 90 de ani de la Marea Unire....* document 1, “Cronica parohiei Mureșenii Bârgăului, autor, preotul Victor Lazăr,” 44-49; A. Onofreiu, “Restituiri istorice. Cronica parohiei Șoimuș scrisă de Ioan Baciș” *Revista Bistriței*, XXVI (2012): 173-202; Mihai Ungurean, “Primul Război Mondial văzut dintr-un sat bucovinean,” *Dacia Literară*, XXVI, (new series as of 1990), 130-131 (7-8/2014): 33-42.

invalids, orphans and widows. The first regulations concerning the rights of war invalids, orphans and widows were published by the Ruling Council. This document resumed the text of Ordinance no. 18841 issued by the Ministry of War on 21 March 1919, which stipulated that the invalids of World War I should be checked into and treated in hospitals.²²

In the summer of the same year, the Ruling Council decided that military pensioners, war invalids, widows and orphans should receive “care allowances (pensions).” This directive was the first to specify the necessary data that were to be submitted to the town halls by the aforementioned categories. For disabled soldiers, the following information was to be provided: rank, name, the troop corps they had belonged to recently, the amounts of the pension, the injury compensation and the gift of grace, indigency – the *plasa* (district), county, current home address (street, village, circle/area, country), the date until which allowances had been received and their sources, as well as the nearest revenue office where allowances were to be paid. Showing the payment order was mandatory.²³

For military widows and orphans, additional information was required: the name of the husband (father), the widow’s first name, the former military corps of the husband (father), when and where the husband (father) had died or disappeared, the amount of the pension, the orphan’s name, year, month and day of birth, the decree under which the allowances had been approved, indigency (the *plasa* or district and the *județ* or county), the current home address (street, village, district and county), the date, including the month, until which allowances had been paid and the place, the nearest revenue office where allowances were to be paid; in the case of parentless orphans, the name of the legally appointed guardian had to be specified too. Mayors were bound to receive these requests and fill out the forms for widows and orphans, including data concerning the time and place of death (disappearance) for the husband (father), and then to send them out to the “Department for Pensions, in Sibiu.”²⁴

The regulations governing these aspects were unified with the expansion of the legislation issued by the Government in Bucharest to Transylvania. Taking as a basis the regulations enacted during the war years, which had addressed the consequences of the military operations on the civilian population,²⁵ several laws and regulatory provisions were adopted relating to this issue.

22. *Gazeta Oficială a Consiliului Dirigent*, 23, (30 March/12 April 1919): 241-242.

23. *Gazeta Oficială a Consiliului Dirigent*, 35 (16 June 1919): 354.

24. *Gazeta Oficială a Consiliului Dirigent*, 354-355. Under the Memo of 24 September 1919, issued by the Ruling Council, the Department of Social Welfare, the white and colored templates of census records were established; *Gazeta Oficială a Consiliului Dirigent*, 59 (11 October 1919): 655-656.

25. See the Law of December 24, 1916 relating to war infirmities and diseases, for which state aid was granted, in C. Hamangiu, *Codul general al României*, vol. VIII (1913-1919): 1077-1095 and the Enforcement Regulations, in *Codul general al României*, 1096-1108.

First, the Law of 2 September 1920 established the National Office of War Invalids, Widows and Orphans, subordinated to the Ministry of War (I.O.V.). The main duties of the new body were to “facilitate the enforcement of the legally recognized rights of war invalids, widows and orphans” and to “issue individual titles or certificates, attesting these rights, as well as to monitor and control their enforcement.” As regards the organization of this administrative body, a Central Office was created in Bucharest. County offices were founded across the country, as branches of the central office. The category of war invalids, orphans and widows included *all the persons who have become invalids, orphans or widows, from any cause related to the war events or in any way connected with the war* (our emphasis).²⁶

From this perspective, the documents in table form present the consequences of the war on the rural world. For the first time, the statistical data that were introduced into the scientific circuit spoke about the blood tribute paid by the German (Saxon) ethnic group, whose members deserved to be honored in perpetuity,²⁷ alongside a synthesis of the I.O.V.R. documents for the village of Șieu, as a natural addition to the records compiled by the priest here.²⁸ Additional texts included documents addressed to the officials either by the local authorities, as juridical persons, or by individuals who had been directly involved in the war, having fought on the battlefields, or had been left without the much needed support of those who had died on duty.

26. *Codul general al României*, vol. IX (1919-1922): 407-419. Some compensations for these categories, laid down by law, referred to the granting of free lots for the building of houses, facilities for the opening of restaurants and preferential treatment in land allotment, in keeping with the agrarian laws adopted after World War I.
27. For other references from this perspective, see A.N.B.-N., Fund: *Gustav Zikeli*, d. 5, “Auto-biografie”, 42-50 (translated text); Otto Dahinten, *Gescichte der Stadt Bistritz in Siebenbürgen* (Böhlau Verlag Köln-Wien, 1988), 167-178. For portraits of Saxon officers from World War I, see Ernst Wagner, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stadt Bistritz in Siebenbürgen. 3 Band. Nord-siebenbürgen in den Jahren 1940-1945, zum Gedenktreffen der Nordsiebenbürger 7-9 September 1984 in Dinkelsbühl*, 40-46.
28. The first statistical data, published in *Fabricat în Runcu-Salvei. Repere monografice*, eds. Vasile Lechințan, Adrian Onofreiu and Mircea Prahase (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Eikon, 2013), the chapter “Dor și jale. Cele două conflagrații mondiale din secolul XX și urmările lor” authored by Ioan Cordova and Adrian Onofreiu, 210-234; Adrian Onofreiu, “Dor și jale. Cele două conflagrații mondiale și urmările lor la Rodna” *Cetatea Rodnei*, X, 20, (May 2013): 4-6; A. Onofrei, “Dor și jale. Cele două conflagrații mondiale din secolul XX și urmările lor pe Valea Bârgăului” *Anuarul Bârgăuan*, IV, 4 (2014): 65-76. Our statistical records are preserved at the Bistrița-Năsăud County Branch of the National Archives, thus: “Lista soldaților din comuna Rebrîșoara, comitatul Bistrița-Năsăud, luând parte la *Marele Război al Lumii* (s.n.), Fund: *Emil Precup*, d. 59; “Tabel de românii grăniceri din toate comunele grănicerești care au luat parte în războiul din 1914-1918,” comprising details such as: whether he took part in the movements imposed by the war, having been summoned to do so, whether he was a refugee, the fate he endured during the war, whether he returned home, whether he went missing, the fate of the family of the deceased / the man gone missing; *Idem*, fond *Leon Bancu*, d. 1.

To these were added the testimonials of those stationed in areas of military conflict, whose thoughts were permanently back “home,” concerned about the destiny of their families/households, which had been left in the care of those unable to carry weapons.²⁹ For the village inhabitants, the war had brought many sufferings, both by wresting those who could fight in arms away from their homes, “shedding” them across all the battlefields of Europe, and especially through the daily sufferings of those who had remained at home: striving to toil the land, confronted with the dearth and the high cost of all the products, bearing the burden of daily strife in the absence of the support provided by the “heads” of their families, grieving their untimely demise on the front: this picture was multiplied by the tens of thousands amongst the families of the rural world.

Our motivation is to contribute – by disclosing and introducing these types of documents into scientific research – to the creation of a documentary base that could genuinely supplement official (military or political) history, beneficent in terms of both historical analysis and honoring the memory of those who served their homeland, regardless of whether this goal was deeply entrenched or not in their souls.

All the listed documents capture some aspects of the suffering of those fallen or mutilated soldiers, but they cannot render the *daily drama* and *suffering* of those left without the support of the heads of their families, the sons who had lost their fathers or the elderly who had lost their sons. These sufferings were – *and still are* – assumed tacitly, but profoundly by the families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice *for the country*.³⁰ According to the data centralized in the immediate aftermath of the Great War by T. V. Păcățian,³¹ 13,370 Romanians were mobilized to the front from the former county of Bistrița Năsăud, alongside 1,252 indi-

29. Some of these records have been published; see Dr. Emil Precup, *Dor și jale. Pățanii și suferințe. Poezii culese din război. Aranjate și publicate pentru popor*, Tiparul Tipografiei Diecezane Gherla, 1920. The unpublished part of these testimonies is equally ample, see A.N.B.-N., Fund: *Emil Precup*, d. 395. See also Liviu Păiuș, *Lacrimi și durere. Folclor din război* (Bistrița: Ed. George Coșbuc, 2003); L.Păiuș, “Soldat și prizonier. Însemnări din primul război mondial” *Arhiva Someșană*, Năsăud, series III, III (2004): 507-523; the evocation of a high-ranking combatant, Alexandru Ciura, *Colonelul Anchidim Șioldea 1858-1915* (Blaj, 1915), or the study of Vasile Dobrescu, Adrian Onofreiu, “Pe front și în spatele frontului. Consemnări din zona Bistriței și Năsăudului despre evenimentele din primul război mondial,” in *Simpozion. Comunicările celui de al XXIV-lea simpozion al cercetătorilor români din Ungaria*, Giula, 2015, ed. Maria Berényi, 78-98.

30. Still, for Northern Transylvania, the *homeland* meant, during the war, *another country*, in which they were forced to live together and for which they had to make the ultimate sacrifice, because of the adversities of history. However, they maintained their steadfast faith in an ideal and their descendants assumed their sacrifice, experiencing the tragedies and the hardships of survival and receiving just a faint recognition of this *sacrifice*, by eventually acquiring the status of an I.O.V.R. retiree and having the names of those *who never returned* engraved on the commemorative stone monuments dedicated to the heroes of the nation..

31. See the work cited in the following note.

viduals who were mobilized for the sedentary, administrative services. Those who perished on the battlefields included 1,463 Romanian soldiers; 423 died in prisons or hospitals from the injuries they had incurred and 989 went missing. 693 disabled Romanians returned home. Those who were killed in battle left behind 1,125 widows and 2,564 orphans.

The state of exception triggered by the war in Transylvania from July 1914 to November 1918, never encountered before on such a scale and at such lengthy duration, generated in the society or, at least, in the Romanian Transylvanian a set of complex attitudes, behaviors and consequences which can be partially captured also through the documents we have researched and appended at the end of this study (just a few out of a multitude). The Great War challenged both the civil and the ecclesiastical authorities to find solutions for the social and economic problems facing the parishioners during those years, but also immediately after the military conflict. Naturally, these problems and interventions were much more complex than we have managed to present them in this study. With regard to the demographic impact, the casualties generated pain and suffering among the widows and the orphaned children, people reacting differently in the face of the challenges brought the belligerent context in which they now conducted their everyday lives. The secular and the ecclesiastical authorities demanded the population to donate money, food and other supplies for the soldiers on the front lines, as well as to support the women, the elderly and the children struggling on the home front. Without a doubt, the absence of these signs of solidarity would have made even more dramatic and more difficult the everyday existence of thousands and thousands of people.

Appendices

Table of the War Invalids, Orphans and Widows from World War I – the village Șieu³²

Surname and first name /date of birth	First name of the wife/ parents and marital status	Circumstances of death/accident	Children/ parents/ year of birth	File no.
Balmoș Ioan	Applicant/invalid	Enrolled in the 32nd Honvéd Regiment; injured and fallen into captivity, returned home and discharged on 08. 11. 1918; radial nerve paralysis, loss of the index and middle fingers of his right hand.	1. Victoria, 1910 2. Florica, 1914	113
Buta Toader, 1892	Parents: Nicolae Maria	Enrolled in the 63rd Infantry Regiment; died in a military field hospital, as a result of war injuries, on 19. 10. 1918.	-	455
Cochisa Ioan 1880	Cochisa Maria, wife, widow	Enrolled in the 32nd Honvéd Regiment; disappeared on the Italian front, in 1916.	Alexandru, 1906	692
Curea Ioan 1888	Applicant/invalid	Enrolled in the 32nd Honvéd Regiment; severe abdominal hernia as a consequence of a war injury	-	722
Emrich Ioan 1885	Wife: Maria, widow	Enrolled in the 32nd Honvéd Regiment; died on the battlefield on 20.10.1914	Ioan, 1907 Martin, 1910 Maria, 1913 George, 1915	830
German Teodor 1883	Wife: Ioana, widow	Enrolled in the 63rd Infantry Regiment; disappeared on the front, on 11.04.1916	Maria, 1907 Ioan, 1909	1001
Lutsch Michael 1882	Applicant/invalid	Enrolled in the 63rd Infantry Regiment; injured on the Russian front, at Ursale Gorge, on 17.02.1916; missing all his left toes.	-	1429
Mai Johann 1893	Wife: Mai Cristina, widow	Enrolled in the 12th Artillery Regiment; disappeared on the front on 03. 06. 1917.	Cristina, 1912 Rosina, 1914 Maria, 1917	1445
Podar Andrei 1891	Applicant/invalid	Enrolled in the 63rd Infantry Regiment; total atrophy of left leg, following a bullet wound, on 12.11.1917	Toader, 1910 Lucreția, 1912 Andrei, 1917	1942

32. Bistrița-Năsăud County Branch of the National Archives, Fund: *War Invalids, Orphans and Widows*, inv. no. 805.

Surname and first name /date of birth	First name of the wife/ parents and marital status	Circumstances of death/accident	Children/ parents/ year of birth	File no.
Podar Teodor 1888	Wife: Florica, widow	Enrolled in the 32nd Honvéd Regiment; died on the battlefield, on 03.11.1914.	Todora, 1908 Ioan, 1911	1943
Sbânca Ioan 1892	Parents: Ioan Florica	Enrolled in the 63rd Infantry Regiment; disappeared on the Galician front, in October 1914.	-	2236
Sbânca George 1887	Wife: Maria, widow	Enrolled in the 32nd Honvéd Regiment; disappeared on the Italian front in 1916.	Maria, 1912	2237
Schneider Gheorghe 1897	Applicant/invalid	Enrolled in the 100th Infantry Regiment, the marines, in Pola; injury of the lumbar spine.	-	2245
Schneider Martin 1881	Wife: Rosina, widow	Enrolled in the 63rd Infantry Regiment; disappeared on the front, after enrolment, on 04.04.1914	Martin, 1907 George, 1911	2248

Document no. 1.

Much Honored Mr. Prefect!

Although we are very poor women with children, deprived of housing, food and clothing, and our men have not yet returned from the war or from the prison camps, and we must struggle with the direst shortcomings, still, the city's Magistrate has ceased our war aid.

We hereby request the much Honored Mr. Prefect to intervene with the authorities in question and ensure that the aid is paid to us, for at least a few more months, until farming starts or until our husbands return home.

We stand by them with utmost obedience and humility.

Bistrița, 25 February 1919.

Bretean Ana, with two children; Pop Maria, with two children; Prislopan Todora, with two children; Emma Lütsch; Z. Rinder.

Bistrița-Năsăud County Branch of the National Archives, Fund: *The Prefecture of Năsăud County - Subprefect*, d 78/1919, f. 1.

Document no. 2.

To the Much Honored Prefecture!

We are old women, past 60 years old, and, before the war, we were supported and helped by our sons, who have not yet returned from the prison camps, however, despite all this the war aid is no longer granted to us and now we cannot make a living.

We hereby request the much Honored Prefecture to insist that our war aid should be paid to us, at least until farming starts or until our sons return home.

Bistrița, 25 February 1919.

Căilean Maria, widow; Marcus Veronica.

Ibidem, d. 79/1919, f. 1.

Document no. 3.

Much Honored Mr. Prefect!

Although our husbands have not returned from war yet, respectively, from the prison camps, and although we, the undersigned, have a bunch of kids and struggle with the shortcomings day and night, because of the great dearth, the city's Magistrate has withdrawn our war aid, stating only that it would no longer be paid to us.

Because housing, food, clothes and footwear are very expensive and farming in the fields has not yet begun and, therefore, we have no earnings, all we are left with is ask the much Honored Mr. Prefect to kindly help us obtain our war aid for a few more months, up until our husbands return, as they are presumed to be held captive at this time.

Gavra Florica, with six children, all of them small;

Neag Ludovica, with two children.

Ibidem, d. 47/1919, f. 1.

Document no. 4.

Most Illustrious Mr. Prefect!

We, the humble undersigned, turned into the heads of our families by the gruesome world war, hereby take upon us the presumptuous and urgent request that you should mercifully look for ways in which we, in our precarious state, can be helped.

Three months have passed since we last received our aid, the pension due to us because our husbands were snatched away from us by the war. For three months no bread or flour has been given to us, not even in exchange for money. If we dare go to the Saxon villages in the county, where we could buy some victuals, that is also not allowed to us, the flour, the food or any other source of livelihood is confiscated from us, and our dire cir-

cumstances are not taken into account, because we are buying these at unheard-of prices, and they don't care that we've been at war for 5 years and that we've been living like Eskimos, feeding on whatever we could find.

We have no private wealth other than the hovels where we mourn our men and relatives killed at war, in which we secretly bewail the suffering of our children, who are asking for bread and we have no bread to give them. In these hovels we bemoan our children's fate, for it won't be long before we must starve to death.

We would work anywhere and anytime, but the situation is such that there is nothing to do, for there's no work for us in our village.

In such conditions, in the most desperate of circumstances, we have come to the office of Your Illustriousness and we pray to you with tears in our eyes:

That you, as the highest power holder in the county, should kindly intercede on our behalf and find a way for us to receive our pension, the due aid, in the shortest possible time, that you should kindly intercede and have victuals sent to the village regularly, every week or every fortnight, for otherwise, we can't buy anything with the little money we have.

About our family situation, we are enclosing a statement, under. /.

In the end, we pray that you will kindly take into account most seriously our humble request, for otherwise we are bound to starve.

Borgo-Tiha,³³ on 7 March 1919.

Florea Bozga, Maria Cionca, Nastasia Duca, Palagia Tălpaș, Maria Lucin, Maria Păvălean, Ioana Tomoroaga, Maria Docie, Agrina Dologa, Ioana Sorian, Todora Jauca, Lăcătuș Raveca, Mariuca Păvălean, Maria Docea, Luciu Angelina.

Ibidem., d. 74/1919, f. 1.

33. Tiha Bărgăului, Bistrița-Năsăud County.

ITALIAN MILITARY DEATHS IN THE WWI

National Estimates and Regional Differences



ALESSIO FORNASIN, MARCO BRESCHI,
NELU DAN, MATTEO MANFREDINI

Abstract

After the end of the WWI the Italian Ministry of War instituted the *Albo d'oro dei caduti della guerra*; a roll of honour intended to record the names of all the Italian soldiers who died in combat or as a direct result of the war, with the first of a total of 28 volumes completed in 1926, and the last in 1964. The information from the *Albo d'oro* has allowed to gain insight into a number of aspects regarding the mortality of Italian soldiers in the First World War. Notable differences emerge between the results from this source and previously consolidated notions regarding, first and foremost, the total number of military war-related deaths. The estimates of 651,000 military deaths, which appeared immediately after the end of the war, are too high. With the aid of the summary data collected at regional level, we examine some spatial aspects of the mortality of the military personnel during the conflict. It emerges that existed many regional differences on Military deaths. These differences are related with demographic, anthropometric and socio-economic characteristics.

Keywords

Italy, Military deaths, Mortality, Roll of honour, WWI

1. Introduction

THE DETERMINATION of the number of military and civilian deaths and their main demographic characteristics has been addressed by a number of authors. While Italian scholars led this field of research¹, the subject also generated interest, albeit less intense, in other European countries². Just a few years after the end of the conflict, however, this initial interest dwindled and research on the subject all but halted, despite the demographic scars from the war remaining evident in the structure of European populations until recently. Naturally, WWI is just one of the examples for which historians and demographers have attempted to calculate both military and civilian deaths. The subject proves to be extremely complex and the number of victims can only be determined approximately³. From the demographical point of view, the research concerns mostly the number of fallen, the birth cohorts of the dead soldiers, the selection based on the rank or the military corps they belonged to⁴. In spite of the huge number of studies, many aspects of the war mortality remain obscure. One of these is the territorial distribution of the fallen i.e. if there are mortality differences based on the territorial origin of the soldiers⁵.

This approach essentially was not tackled because the sources that allow this kind of research are rare or hard to employ or, whenever they exist, they are not

1. Giorgio Mortara, *La salute pubblica in Italia durante e dopo la Guerra* (Bari: G. Laterza & figli, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925), Corrado Gini, *I morti dell'esercito italiano dal 24 maggio 1915 al 31 dicembre 1918* (Roma: Provveditorato Generale dello Stato, 1926).
2. For Germany, see Emil Roesle, "The Mortality in Germany, 1913-1921: The Effects of War Casualties and Famine on Mortality," *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 20 no 149 (1925): 163-178. For France and Colonies, Michel Huber, *La population de la France pendant la guerre, avec un appendice sur Les revenus avant et après la guerre* (Paris: PUF, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931). For the British Empire, War Office, *Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire during the Greath War. 1914-1920* (London: His Majesty Stationery Office, 1922). For Russia, Stanislas Kohn, *The Cost of the War to Russia* (New York, NY: Howard Fertig, 1973). In general Samuel Dumas and Knud Otto Vedel-Petersen, *Losses of Life Caused by War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923); Liebmann Hersch, "La mortalité causée par la guerre mondiale," *Metron*, 7, no 1 (1927): 3-82.
3. Giorgio Rochat, "Una ricerca impossibile. Le perdite italiane nella seconda guerra mondiale," *Italia Contemporanea*, 201 (1995): 687-700. Olivier Faron, "Guerre(S) et Démographie Historique," *Annales de démographie historique*, 103, no 1 (2002): 5-9.
4. An example for Italy: Alessio Fornasin, "Le perdite dell'esercito italiano nella Prima guerra mondiale," *Dipartimento di scienze economiche e statistiche, Università di Udine*, Working paper, no 1 (2014). For France see Jacques Vallin, *La mortalité par génération en France, depuis 1899* (Paris: PUF, 1973).
5. A notable exception regards France. Cf. Henri Gilles, Jean-Pascal Guironnet and Antoine Parent, "Géographie économique des morts de 14-18 en France," *Revue économique*, 65 no 3 (2014): 519-532. André Loez and Nicolas Mariot, "Tous égaux devant «l'impôt du sang»? L'approche spatiale de la mort de masse en 1914-1918 et ses enjeux Un commentaire de «Géographie économique des morts de 14-18 en France»," *Revue économique*, 65, no 3 (2014): 533-542.

used. This is the case of Italy where it exists a roll of honour, the *Albo d'oro dei caduti*, published between 1926 and 1964, which gathers the names of the Italian soldiers fallen during the conflict and is organized by municipality of birth⁶. This source, therefore, allows detailed studies of the fallen during the war related to their geographical origin. These detailed studies can be useful not only to understand the specific Italian case but concern the interpretation of the war mortality fallen in all the countries. The distribution of the fallen based on the region of origin is particularly significant for Italy as the country was marked by relevant socio-economic territorial differences not comparable with the other European countries. The purpose of this work is to verify if these disparities had a role in the First World War in creating mortality differences.

The mortality differential is one of the classical themes of demography. We identify an environmental, income and educational differential mortality. In this paper the topic is discussed from a geographical point of view and applied to an armed conflict. Actually, the differential mortality theme was debated many times, although not always from a strictly demographical point of view. The military historians, for example, focused on the mortality difference between the soldiers and the officials or if these risks were different in corps of the armed forces⁷.

To achieve this goal the work was split into four parts. After the description of the main source of this paper, we made a brief summary of the socioeconomic aspects of Italy at the eve of the war; in the third part we illustrate some of the demographic and social origins of the regional differences in mortality of soldiers; in the last part we discuss the major results and suggest some interpretations of the different regional levels of mortality of Italian soldiers.

2. The source

THE MAIN source of this paper is the *Albo d'oro dei caduti della guerra*, a roll of honour intended to record the names of all the Italian soldiers who died in combat or as a direct result of the war. This work consists in a total of 28 volumes. The first was completed in 1926, and the last in 1964. In the original plan, the information collected this way was, only after the publication of the last of these volumes, to be used to integrate and rectify the texts already compiled in 'draft' form, with the official publication of the entire work once all the data was harmonized. Despite the awareness that these early works could not be considered entirely reliable, nevertheless, there was complete faith in the idea that

6. *Albo d'oro dei caduti della guerra* (Roma: Provveditorato generale dello Stato, 1926-1964).

7. Virgilio Ilari, *Storia del servizio militare in Italia*, 2, *La «nazione armata»* (1871-1918) (Roma: Centro militare di studi strategici, 1990), 446.

the final results would be consistent with previous estimates and that the adjustments would therefore have been minimal⁸.

The compilation of the *Albo d'oro* proceeded slowly, mostly due to the complexity of the operation itself and the interruption during WWII, and was completed some 40 years after its start, with the final figure resulting as notably lower than the canonical 650,000 at 'only' 529,025. By the time of its publication, interest in the subject had declined considerably and the use of results of the *Albo d'oro* was neglected in successive studies.

The *Albo d'oro* was intended to honour those who have died for their country through the inscription of their name and certain details of their war experience. Its compilation criteria are detailed by Fulvio Zugaro, head of the Army's Statistics Office and Chief Scientific Advisor of the operation⁹. The *Albo d'oro* was intended to include the deaths in any war-related context: killed or missing in battle; disappeared in war camps; death due to disease, accidental causes, suicides etc. Substantial resources were dedicated to the operation, using a multitude of channels that involved numerous central and peripheral public authorities, including the Town Councils' Register offices (Population registers and Civil registers), Statistics Office of the Supreme Command; Historical Office of the Supreme Command; Ministry of War; Head Offices of Military Health; Italian Red Cross, Press Offices, Care and Honours Commission; and General Pensions Office. It is important to stress that these sources not only include all the ones already used by the Supreme Command, but also other, with the aim of integrating potentially missing information.

At the end of each of the 28 volumes a series of summarizing tables regarding also the single regional contexts were inserted. To create these tables, one of the first computers with punch cards was used¹⁰. The tables are: 1) The fallen ordered by cause and year of death; 2) the fallen ordered by year of birth and year of death; 3) the fallen ordered by military corps and rank; 4) the fallen decorated with medals classified by birth district and decoration.

Therefore, for each Italian region, there is already available partially elaborated information of the fallen. Of particular interest, for the present research, is the one relative to the causes of death.

The causes of death are classified in five groups. In order of frequency, this groups are: «injury», «disease», «accident», «gas attack», «avalanche». Beyond these indications, there are other, more vague, that cannot be defined as true causes of death because they refer to soldiers of whom fate was not verified or verifiable, although

8. Fulvio Zugaro, "L'Albo d'Oro dei caduti per l'Italia nella Guerra mondiale," Bollettino dell'Ufficio Storico dello Stato Maggiore del Regio Esercito, 1, no 4 (1926). Fulvio Zugaro, ed., *La forza dell'esercito* (Roma: Provveditorato general e dello Stato 1927), XIV.

9. Zugaro, "L'Albo d'Oro".

10. Zugaro, "L'Albo d'Oro".

easily deducible. Thus we have «dispersion», in other words the missing in action; this cause of dead was ascribed almost exclusively to those soldiers fallen on the battlefield but whose bodies was not identified. Another cause of dead was «disappearance» that refers to almost all the soldiers or dead sailors in the sea and of a limited number of prisoners. Although it is not made explicit at the source, we can assume that, for the latter, the death cause was almost always a disease. In this work we use only a simplified classification that divides the deaths due to injury and dispersion and those due to disease, not considering all the other ones.

At this point, therefore, it is possible to carry out a territorial type analysis, supporting the *Albo d'oro* data with already available information for the main administrative divisions of the country.

3. Italy at the eve of War. Socio-economic aspects

ONE OF the most solid historical permanencies of Italy is given by its big territorial socio-economic differences. At the moment of the Italian political unification (1861), it was crystal clear to the authorities ruling the country that there were huge territorial differences¹¹ and although these diminished through the years, they always remain observable up to now. The differences North-South are divided depending on the economic, social, demographic, even geographic characteristics that we take into account.

The theme on how the north-south difference developed in time is subject of extensive literature¹². Through this work we take into account only some aspects of this gap. We use it to explain some characteristics of the war mortality. From the economical point of view, the aspect on which it was frequently insisted, is given by the different levels of development of the country, specifically considering the industrialization process. At the eve of War, the reality was reflected by the number of industry workers related to 1911 (Fig. 1).

The figure depicts clearly how the Industry workers are concentrated in the North-Western regions, the engine of the economic development of the country. Lombardy, Piedmont and Liguria, were the regions of the so called industrial triangle, where it was concentrated, among others, great part of the mechanical and metallurgical industry essential for manufacturing of arms used during the conflict. Going down south, the number of employed in the industry diminishes as well as the number of agricultural workers increases until they become minimal along the Adriatic coast, in the islands and in the southern poorest regions of the country.

11. Luciano Cafagna, *Dualismo e sviluppo nella storia d'Italia* (Venezia: Marsilio, 1989).

12. For an overview see Stefano Fenoaltea, *The Reinterpretation of Italian Economic History from Unification to the Great War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

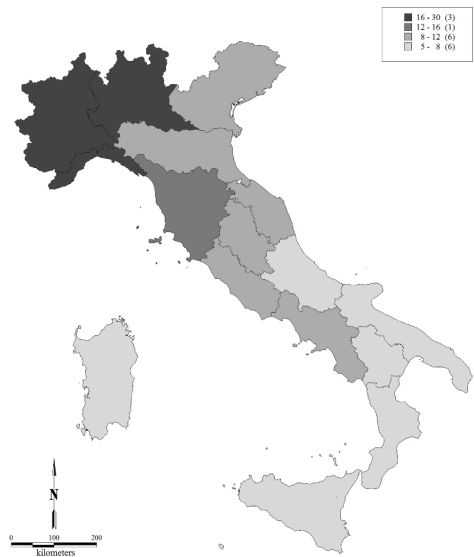


Fig. 1. Industry workers in Italian regions in 1911 (%)

SOURCE: Maic, Censimento degli opifici e delle imprese industriali al 10 giugno 1911 (Roma: Maic, 1914).



Fig. 2. Illiterate people in Italian regions in 1911 (%)

SOURCE: MAIC, Censimento della popolazione del Regno d'Italia al 10 giugno 1911 (Roma: MAIC, 1914).

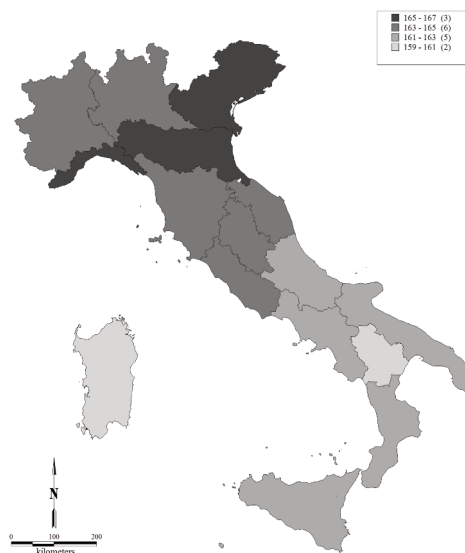


Fig. 3. *Average Height (cm) of Italians conscripts. Birth cohort 1874*

SOURCE: Alessandro Costanzo, "La statura degli italiani ventenni nati dal 1854 al 1920," *Annali di Statistica*, s. 7, no 2 (1948), 80.

Another significant datum regarding the territorial differences was given by the illiterates level (Fig. 2).

Figure 3 depicts the distribution in different regions of the percentage of illiterate people. This shows a North-South gradient with the southern regions and the islands. The third map of this series regards the height of the soldiers. The height is an aspect closely correlated to the life standard. At the population level, in fact, it is the result of three different components, in addition to the genetic characteristics it depends on the nutritional level and the health.

Also, in the case of the height the territorial differences are very evident. The highest soldiers come from north-east, the shortest from south.

Finally, in figure 4, we present a map that summarizes, with the life expectancy at birth data, the demographic characteristics of various regions.

In this case the map does not result as readable as the previous ones. It is beyond doubt that, generally, the life expectancy at birth is greater in the northern regions and, above all, in the central regions, but this distribution shows exceptions.

This map allows the introduction of an argument that reinforces itself as we go ahead with the research, in other words, not all the population characteristics of the Italian society at that time can be dealt with in the same way.

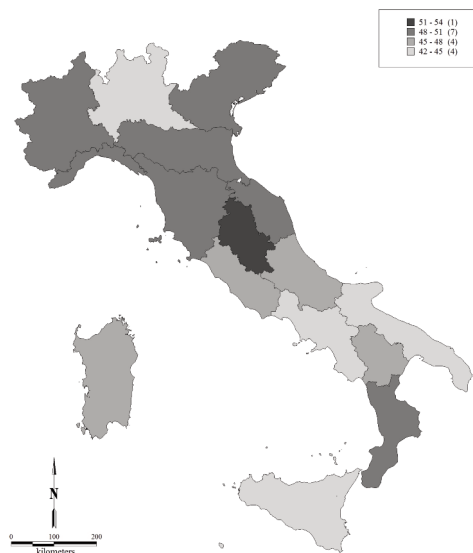


Fig. 4. *Life expectancy at birth*

SOURCE: Del Pantà, *Italian regional life tables*. Unpublished data.

4. Italians at War. Demographic and social origins of the regional differences

THE *ALBO d'oro* helps us to find which are the regions that paid the highest price during the war in terms of human lives. There are several ways to make this analysis.

A way it is the one described in the figure 5 that reports the percentage, obtained from the *Albo d'oro*, of the fallen due to injury or of the missing in action, in other words of those soldiers who died in battle. Of course, the same map, if read in negative terms shows closely the percentage of deceased by disease.

The cause of death certainly does not qualify the general mortality. To carry on this analysis it is not sufficient to make confrontations with the population in its entirety but to evaluate essentially how many persons underwent the risk of death.

For this purpose the possibilities are three: the number of the soldiers who participated to the war for each generation; the state data with age distribution; the civil state registrations of the newborn. Each of these possibilities show critical aspects that limit strongly the explanatory power of the rate inferred.

In principle, the data to be preferred should be by far the one related to the soldiers called to arms, in other words, the population at risk of death because of



Fig. 5. Deceased soldiers by injury and dispersion in WWI (%)

SOURCE: Albo d'oro 1926-64.

«proved cause of war». The most important source from where this information can be taken is *La forza dell'esercito*¹³. The volume, is extensively used by the researchers to evaluate what was the number of soldiers employed in Italy during the conflict, although some problems are still open¹⁴. In fact, *La forza dell'esercito* is very rich in information and the territorial detail refers to each of the 88 military districts the country was divided. Some confirmations carried out on the figures bring us to strongly doubt about their reliability, especially about what regards the territorial division¹⁵.

The state source that can be used for this study is the population census of 1911. The datum that interests us most is the one related to the male population of the generations 1874-1900, those who provided almost all the soldiers. The use of the census presents also problems. The detail by age, in fact, is provided only on the present population and refers to five-year classes. On one side, therefore, there is a discrepancy with respect to the numerator (the deceased), which is based on the resident population, on the other side the age groups are too wide and

13. Zugaro, *La forza dell'esercito*.

14. Mario Isnenghi and Giorgio Rochat, *La Grande guerra, 1914-1918* (Milano: Sansoni, 2004), 228-232.

15. Alessio Fornasin forthcoming, "I caduti della Basilicata nella Grande guerra. Esplorazioni sull'Albo d'oro," *Popolazione e storia*.

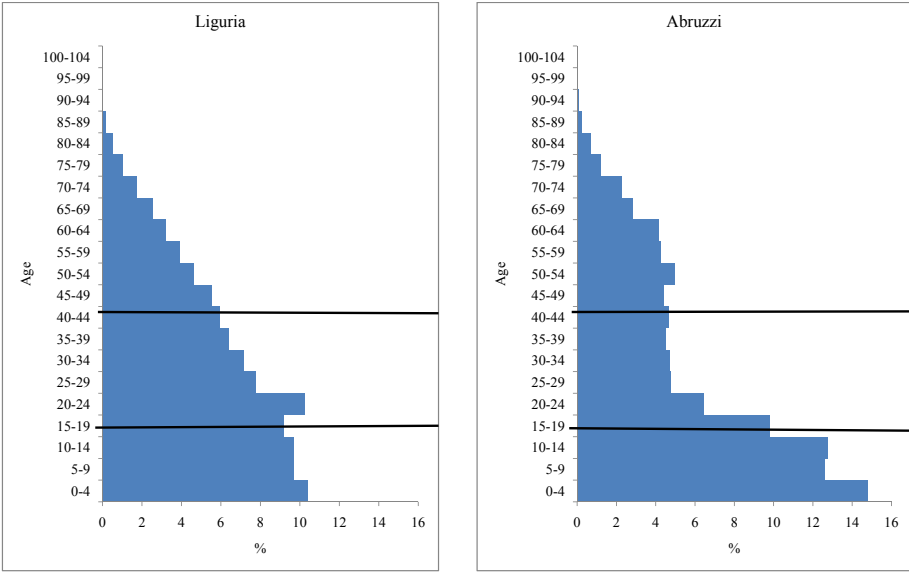


Fig. 6. Age structure of male population of Liguria and Abruzzi in 1911
SOURCE: Censimento della popolazione 1911.

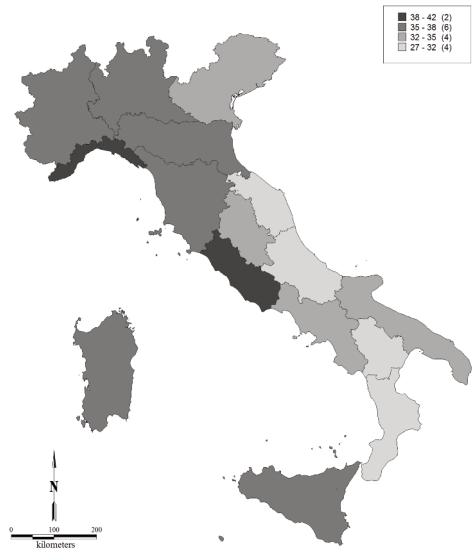


Fig. 7. Male population 18-44 on total males in Italian regions in 1911 (%)
SOURCE: Censimento della popolazione 1911.

not coherent with those of the generations that were effectively called to arms, especially the one with younger soldiers. With this information, therefore, nor we can take into account the different quotes of called to arms for each single cohort, neither to consider the mortality of the cohorts starting from the date of the census until the outbreak of the war.

The mortality statistics are published for each year with regional detail until the Italian political unification for males and females. The problem in using these data at regional level lies in different levels of mortality and in the body of final emigration by age. Since all these data result having problems, eventually we decided to use as denominator the data of the population of the 1911 census, supposing that the structure of the population is not a lot different from the one during the war years.

Once established on what data is preferable to work with, the first factor to be taken into account is given by the structure of the male population, that is strictly correlated to fertility, survival and migration characteristics of the population.

The importance of age structure is obvious in the comparison that arises from the population pyramids, referred to only males from the two regions Liguria and Abruzzi, respectively those that had at the census date of 1911 the maximum and minimum percentage of males of age between 18-44 (Fig. 6).

As we can see, the structure of the two populations is a lot different. These reflect the different levels of birth rate, low for Liguria and high for Abruzzi, then for the infant mortality rates, again, low for Liguria and high for Abruzzi. In the end, we see the different effect of the migrations from the two regions: rather small for Liguria and very big for Abruzzi. Although the two pyramids refer to the population present and not, as from the theoretical point of view would be preferred, on the resident population, namely the one that was called to arms, they reflect well the real "war potential" of the two regions with respect to the number of soldiers that could be used, thus, with respect to the soldiers who could be killed.

In the figure 7 we present the map showing the percentage of the male population 18-44 out of the total number of males, in other words the percentage of potentially called to arms.

From the map results that the distribution of the potential soldiers obviously reflected the demographical conditions of different contexts and it follows a clear enough territorial trend. Also in this case we note a north-south gradient, but the country seems to be divided also in an Eastern area and a Western one. The evaluation of death risk in the war, therefore, does not entirely follow the traditional North-South explanation.

At this point we can compare the number of deceased in the different regions to the male present population of age 18-44. The results of this operation are underlined in the figure 8.

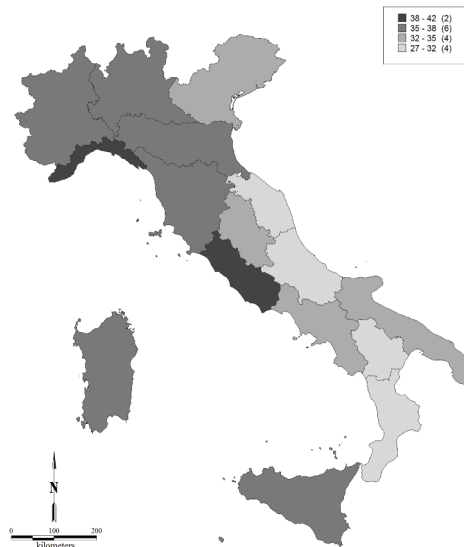


Fig. 8. *Fallen soldiers in WWI aged 18-44 out of present male population (%)*

SOURCE: Albo d'oro 1926-64; Censimento della popolazione 1911.

Of all the maps presented up to now, this is the only one that does not show a territorial distribution and that reflects the traditional divisions of the country. This, therefore, leaves us to think that the outcomes of war in terms of mortality are not a lot different in each area of the country and thus are distributed randomly with respect to their characteristics.

5. Discussion and conclusions

THE UNDERLYING hypothesis of our work is that the same characteristic, for example poverty and underdevelopment, can act on mortality in the same direction. Some characteristics, indeed, could have facilitated an increase in mortality, other could have carried out a protective role. The number of deceased in the war is the consequent of the balancing of positive and negative factors that could have been either demographic or socio-economic.

Let's analyse some of them.

The fertility in the southern part was higher than the Italian average and in these regions, its decline was observed with delay¹⁶. From a mere computational

16. Athos Bellettini, *La popolazione italiana. Un profilo storico* (Torino: Einaudi, 1987), 177. Massimo Livi Bacci, *Donna fecondità e figli. Due secoli di storia demografica italiana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980), 113.

point of view, then, this would imply a growing and proportionally greater number of deployed soldiers from the south as the conflict protracted. In order to limit this effect due to the greater consistency of the generations, the rate of mortality at all ages together with the migration resulted higher in the regions from the south with respect to the rest of Italy¹⁷. These factors should have had as a consequence a push towards lower numbers of the deployed soldiers and, as a consequence, of the fallen.

The demographic characteristics we have just seen, act on the potential number of militaries, but there are some factors that can get closer the number of soldiers to this potential and others the opposite. Among these factors, the anthropometric factors should be ascribed¹⁸. Also in this case, the effects are not all the same. The short stature and the worst health level of the people born in the southern region allowed a consistent number of males to avoid the military service and this saved many young people from death risks connected directly to the war. The soldiers who were anyway slightly taller than the average, as it is obvious, were particularly numerous in the regions where the average height was lower¹⁹ and due to this fact, the risk to die by injury was small. Meanwhile, the shorter young people but suitable for the military service were enlisted in the infantry units, corps where, for its specific duty, the risk of death was higher.

Another important factor connected to the risk of death was the occupation. The percentage of farmers was a lot higher in the southern regions than in the northern ones. The militarization of the farmers, also during the war, was higher than the average. The fact to be a farmer, other than conferring major possibilities to avoid military selection, increased the probability to be inserted in the infantry units and impeded the opportunity to be part of the officers²⁰. In the southern part of Italy, the number of those involved in the industry was small. The specialized workers were highly considered and, in certain ways, were more important than the soldiers because they were essential to keep up the industrial productive capacity of the country. Because of this they were left to work in the factories and did not go to the front. Logistics had its importance too, thus a series of professional figures were sheltered from the front line because they were essential for the construction of the infrastructures and the connection network necessary to keep united the front line to the production centres of the country.

17. Bellettini, *La popolazione italiana*, 179. Ercole Sori, *L'emigrazione italiana dall'Unità alla seconda guerra mondiale* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1979), 25.

18. For this purpose, also for a comparative reading, we suggest Carlo Alberto Corsini, ed., *Statura, salute e migrazioni. Le leve militari italiane* (Udine: Forum, 2009).

19. Ridolfo Livi, *Antropometria militare*, 2, *Dati demografici e biologici* (Roma: Giornale medico del Regio Esercito, 1905), 8-9.

20. For these last ones, the death probabilities were greater for those who were sent to front, but definitely lower for those who were employed in the territorial militia. Cf. Ilari, *Storia del servizio militare in Italia*, 446.

The resultant of this mix of opposing effects was translated in a higher mortality in battle and not necessarily a lower one (seen the progressive reduction of the denominator) due to disease. We could say that the number of soldiers from the south who died of a disease (and thus those imprisoned) was relatively small. This happened because it was proportionally lower with respect to the whole country and these factors started to be very relevant. This occurred after the Caporetto defeat, with regard to the number of dead in prison, and during the winter 1918-19, with regard to the deaths due to the Spanish flu.

Overall, we can be tempted to conclude, seen the insignificant difference between the death hazard of the soldiers originating from different regions in the country, that the different causes of death were not so important in determining the whole number of fallen and, thus, the consequences of the war were very similar in different regional contexts.

The selection due the cause of death we have seen at work has consequences that go beyond the mere count of dead. The fact that a higher percentage of deceased occurred due to injury in battle rather due to disease is not neutral with respect to other consequences for the population. As the rate of the fallen in combat was raising, in fact, as it is normal, the number of injured rises and as a consequence, of young temporarily or permanently disabled people²¹. The available data on the permanent disability do not assign to the southern regions particularly high rates in relation to the Kingdom²². Nevertheless, in addition to the already cited problems related to the sources, we have to consider the fact that in the poor regions the physical disablement, as well as the mortality, did not involve that consistent rate of young people that did not even have the physical characteristics to participate to the conflict. It was not influential, if not partially, the number of emigrants who were the most sound and robust part of the male population²³. Instead, an influence was given by the young healthy people but did not emigrate and thus they could give a greater contribution to the economical growth of the southern regions of Italy. At least under this profile, the impoverishment in terms of human capital caused by the war worsened the situation in all the depressed areas of the country in a greater extent than in the richer regions.

21. Corrado Gini and Livio Livi, "Alcuni aspetti delle perdite dell'Esercito Italiano illustrati in base ai dati degli 'Uffici Notizie,'" *Metron*, 4, no 2 (1924), 2-100.

22. Guglielmo Tagliacarne, *Contributi e comportamenti delle regioni d'Italia in guerra* (Ferrara: Taddei, 1923) 756.

23. Maria Enrica Danubio, Elisa Amicone and Rita Vargiu, "Height and BMI of Italian immigrants to the USA, 1908-1970," *Economics and Human Biology*, 3, no 1 (2005), 33-43.

NATIONALISM



INTERETHNIC RELATIONS AND THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS WAR AS REFLECTED IN THE CLUJ PRESS IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1914



JÓZSEF LUKÁCS

Abstract

In this study I traced the main topics discussed in the news, articles and columns published during the spring and summer of 1914 in the two daily newspapers in Cluj. We started with the assumption that local newspapers reflect attitudes and opinions that their readers mostly agree with. In 1914, there were two daily newspapers in Cluj, both written in Hungarian and both in opposition to the policy of the Hungarian government. By tracing several major issues, such as the interethnic cohabitation, the Romanian issue, the emigration, the concerns over Romania's actions, the assassination of the Crown Prince and the war, I have highlighted the Hungarian population's attitude towards these issues.

Keywords

Cluj, World War I, newspapers, Hungarian, Romanian, nationalism.

IN THIS study I tried to find out how everyday life, domestic and external policy and the events that led to the outbreak of war were reflected in the local press in Cluj in the eve of World War I.

As a documentary source I used the two daily newspapers published in Cluj in 1914. I started with the assumption that a daily newspaper conveys ideas and attitudes that their readers mostly agree with, and that if I traced the issues debated and the nature of the commentaries in the local newspapers, I would find out what their readers thought.

The researched period was so chosen as to comprise the months before the Sarajevo assassination (March to June 28, 1914); the weeks between the assassination and the declarations of war (June 28 to July 28, 1914) and the first two months of war (August to September 1914).

The 1910 census showed that Cluj had a total population of 62,733 permanent residents, of which 51,192 have declared Hungarian as their mother tongue, 8,886 Romanians, 1,678 Germans and almost 1,000 people of another language. It should be noted that those who declared Hungarian as their mother tongue included the Jews in Cluj, which the census did not mark as a separate ethnic group. After a decade, the 1920 census found there were 10,000 Jews in Cluj. That was the situation in the city of Cluj. In the Cluj County, the Romanian population was a majority, with 58%. The Hungarian population had a share of 39.3%.¹

In 1914, there were two daily newspapers in Cluj. Both were Hungarian and both were in the opposition. The National Labor Party (Nemzeti Munkapárt), a liberal party, which ensured a comfortable parliamentary majority for the government of Count István Tisza, didn't have a newspaper in Cluj. Therefore, we can say that the two newspapers reflect how the majority of the Hungarian population thought and we may start with the assumption that most of them, on the one hand, agreed with the way events were discussed and, on the other hand, that they were influenced by such newspapers.

The newspaper *Ellenzék* (*The Opposition*) simply defined itself as a "political daily newspaper". The newspaper was published without interruption from 1880 until the autumn of 1944. It was founded by the publicist and politician Miklós Bartha.

The other newspaper was *Újság* (*The Newspaper*) and called itself "Political newspaper. The official publication in Transylvania of the Independence Party and The forty – eighters' Party".

It was not the political orientation or the conclusions of the commentaries that distinguished the two papers, but rather the target audience. *Újság* was a popular publication, addressed especially to the petty bourgeoisie, while *Ellenzék* was the newspaper of the local intelligentsia.

1. Varga E., Census statistics according to mother tongue and nationality available on <http://varga.adatbank.transindex.ro/?pg=3&action=etnik&id=5290> (23/06/2015)

As noted, both daily newspapers were in the opposition, reflecting the views of the political opponents of the National Labour Party, which had been ruling since 1910, and the political actions of István Tisza, who was appointed prime-minister for the second time in the summer of 1913.

For the period before the Sarajevo assassination, I only traced a few main issues in the newspapers. Since they were local daily papers, they presented mostly local news, from local administrative measures to crimes or misdeeds that occurred in the city or nearby. However, the columns and the commentaries are of special interest. They mirror the way the Hungarians in Cluj and Transylvania thought and show how seriously the possibility of an interethnic coexistence was damaged the eve of War World I.

The Romanian issue

REGARDING THE frequency and the magnitude of the commentaries, the Romanian issue is on the first place, a sign that it was an important concern for the editors and readers of the newspapers. Virtually every issue of both papers contains news and articles about the actions of the Transylvanian Romanians and the events occurring in Romania. The various political and cultural actions of the Romanians were analyzed and the facts published in the Romanian newspapers and magazines were commented upon, both those in Hungary and Romania. The newspaper *Újság* had a regular column entitled "News from the watchtower" relating on events regarding the Romanians. First of all, the most important Romanian publications were traced, such as *Unirea* in Blaj, *Românul* in Arad and the major Bucharest daily papers, but they were also interested in some public statements of the Romanian leaders in Hungary and the politicians in Romania. The views of prominent intellectuals such as Romanian university professors were often quoted and commented on.

Along stories about the Romanians' political actions, one frequently finds news and commentaries about stories whose protagonists were Romanians. One may note that in all these texts the Romanians appear in an unfavourable light, as a mass of dangerous people who conspire and act against the Hungarians, and the Romanian state is seen as the main enemy of the Hungarian kingdom. Virtually all topics regarding domestic and external policy, security, economic, demographic or military issues, were discussed in terms of the Romanian issue and the tensioned coexistence of the Romanians and the Hungarians. After studying the local newspapers in Cluj, even over a short historical period, for a few months, one can notice that these texts could have had only one effect: inducing a sense of insecurity to the public opinion of the Hungarians in Cluj, respectively in Transylvania. How the newspaper articles influenced the collective thinking and how collective

psychoses were reflected in the press of the time could be the subject of another historical study.

The prime-minister István Tisza initiated an electoral reform, designed to widen the number of voters. Another pillar of his domestic policy was the desire to conclude a political agreement with the nationalities in Hungary, especially the Romanians, which he actually considered the real danger to the integrity of the kingdom. István Tisza's demands were received with antipathy, even hatred by the Hungarian public opinion in Cluj. The articles in the local newspapers present Tisza as a tyrant who, out of ignorance or malevolence, destroys the Hungarians in Transylvania. The newspaper *Újság* frequently called the Budapest Parliament, which was dominated by Tisza's party, "Tisza's house", while the parliamentary news was run under the title of "Tisza's house news". The newspaper conveyed the idea that Tisza's policy, considered pro-Romanian, is responsible for the Romanians' ever more categorical claims. He was accused that his policy of supporting Romania in the Second Balkan War helped create a political and military power near Transylvania and that the new provisions of the election law disfavoured the Hungarians living in cities with a predominant Romanian population.

As an example of how István Tisza's policy was discussed, let me quote from the column published in *Újság* on June 6, 1914, the day when the prime-minister was in Cluj. The column was entitled "Ave Caesar! Morituri te salutant!", which was the salute of the gladiators who went to battle. The text cited statistics showing that the Romanians in Transylvania had an absolute majority of 55%. "In the counties around Transylvania live twice as many Romanians as those in Transylvania" the column reads, and continues: "The whole state apparatus of Romania is against us. The Hungarians are a majority in the kingdom, with 54.5%, but their share in Transylvania is about a third. And they are scattered in small islands or live hundreds of kilometres away from the body of the nation." The columnist goes on to show that the events in recent months have proved that against Hungary "a planned and well organized movement is underway [...] and the first Hungarian state official negotiates, makes friends with the organizers and leaders of this institutionalized movement."

The Romanian issue also includes another idea occurring frequently in the commentaries, which fed the prejudices in the inter-ethnic cohabitation: the idea that the Romanians, supported by Romania and with the help of the Romanian banks in Hungary, systematically buy the Hungarians' lands and colonize Romanians on those lands, thus changing the ethnic proportions. For example, the feature article entitled "Albina Bank in the Transylvanian Plain" in the newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 73 of March 31, 1914, shows that the Albina Bank, described as an institution renowned for its enmity towards the Hungarians, acquires land in the Transylvanian Plain in order to colonize Romanian peasants. They mentioned the 1,200 yokes estate in Suatu (Cluj County), formerly owned by the Mikó family, and the 600 yokes estate in Mociu (Cluj County), formerly owned by the Wesselényi family.

They said that by purchasing these estates, the Albina Bank would control the land where natural gas was to be found.

In the newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 83 of April 14, 1914, under the title “State officials acting to save the Hungarians of Transylvania”, we find a story about a conference of delegations of officials from various state institutions, held in Aiud. At the conference, they found – the story says – an alarming decline in the number of Transylvanian Hungarians, while their properties ended up being owned by Romanians. They suggested that a financial institution should be established in order to work at a rate at least equal to that of the Albina Bank. According to this project, state officials would be tasked to announce when properties were to be sold, in order for them to be bought before the Albina Bank did. On these lands, the poor Hungarians wishing to emigrate from the monarchy could be colonized.

Emigration from Transylvania

A RECURRING TOPIC in the Cluj newspapers is the migration of the Transylvanians to other countries. The headlines let us know that there were two big destinations for the emigrants. One was the American continent and the other was Romania. News quoted statistic data on the ones who left. Both Romanians and Hungarians emigrated from Transylvania. One might assume that the Romanians left mostly for the Romanian Kingdom, while the Hungarians moved overseas. It seems that it was not so. From the newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 93 of April 25, 1914, we learn that in 1913 11,021 Szeklers left Romania, of which by the end of the year less than two hundred returned. “The Szeklers leave for the newly conquered territories of Romania, that is, Dobrogea” – reads the newspaper. Another news published in *Ellenzék* No. 142 of June 1914, 26, states that agents of the Romanian state are persuading the poor peasants in the Mureş meadow to move to Dobrogea. Official data showed that, during the first four months of 1914, 6,756 Transylvanians moved to Romania. The same story suggested that this was an entrenched phenomenon which had been occurring for several years. The newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 149 of June 6, 1914, published statistics showing that in April 1914, 25,288 passports were issued in Hungary and among their owners, 17,634 went to the USA, 2,935 to Romania, 588 to Germany and the rest to other countries. Another story about immigrants, published in *Ellenzék* No. 167 of July 27, 1914, the day before the general mobilization, blamed the people’s leaving on the tense international situation and the economic crisis.

The phenomenon of emigration appeared in the news in another context, too. The newspaper *Újság* No. 128 of June 5, 1914, talked about the situation of the 61 Regiment in Timisoara, where from 600 reservists called, about 100 showed up, the rest of the men having emigrated. The War Ministry’s enquiry showed that of those who left only a small part left for America, most of them having fled to Romania.

The new electoral law in Hungary

ANOTHER MAIN topic in the two newspapers was the issue of the new electoral law in Hungary. There was news about the organization of future elections, details on completing the election lists in accordance with the facilities of the new law. The law was important for the kingdom's political life, a fact emphasized by the extensive comments. But in the Cluj newspapers, the commentaries usually were critical to the new law. And not because it didn't grant enough democratic tools, but because it was deemed as a measure that harmed the interests of the Hungarians in Transylvania. Among the arguments reiterated in the articles, we chose one that shows how the Hungarians thought. The newspaper *Újság* No. 59 of March 12, 1914, says that, according to the old electoral law, in Transylvania there were 47,000 Hungarian voters and 23,000 Romanian ones, while according to the new law, there would be 94,000 Hungarians and 69,000 Romanians, and in the counties of Făgăraș, Hunedoara, Solnoc-Dăbâca, Alba de Jos, Bistrița-Năsăud, Turda-Arieș the supremacy of the Romanian voters would be absolute. The conclusion of the article's author was that "Tisza's election law gave away Transylvania to Romania."

International policy was rarely commented upon in the newspapers. Basically, external news talked about the political events in Romania or criticized the foreign policy of the prime-minister Tisza, regarded as too permissive with Romania. It should be noted that in newspapers, worldwide political events were discussed with a surprising naiveté, which shows that neither the journalists who wrote in the two newspapers in Cluj, nor the Hungarian politicians quoted in the articles were at least familiar with the political and military developments in Europe or worldwide. The main external enemy of the Monarchy was identified as the Russian Empire and the likelihood of a war with it was often mentioned. As an example of how naively the foreign political events were discussed, let me quote the newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 74 of April 1, 1914, which published a story about the efforts of the Russian diplomacy to isolate the United Kingdom. They convey the idea that Germany should cede Alsace and Lorraine to France and in return receive territories in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

Political commentaries show that the possibility of an outbreak of a world war was not taken seriously. At most, a possible war between Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was discussed, in which Romania could be also involved. The articles speculated on Romania's position: in case of such war, would it ally with the Monarchy or with the Russian Empire?

The topic of the Hungarians' insecurity

The articles in the Cluj newspapers published before the Sarajevo assassination suggest that the extremely tense ethnic relations in Transylvania induced a sense of insecurity among the Hungarians, which were outnumbered by the Romanians. Virtually all political measures were commented in view of the efficiency with which they were directed or not against the Romanian aspirations.

It was the fear of Romania, the fear that the Old Kingdom's army would enter Transylvania and, with the support of the Romanian majority population, could take over territories from the Monarchy or from the Hungarian Kingdom. The magnitude of the texts on this topic lets us know that this was a very intense feeling, which generated a series of discussions, approaches and commentaries related to the military defence of Transylvania. To show how the issue was seen, let me quote some articles.

The newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 98 of May 2, 1914, published an article entitled "The defence against Romania. The Szeklers need a railroad". It was an account about the report addressed by the city of Odorheiu Secuiesc to the Hungarian parliament, stating that one should learn from the Balkan Wars, when Romanian armed forces entered Bulgaria, which was not able to defend itself. "Romania does not hide the fact that it wants to annex Transylvania – reads the report – the time is approaching when this goal will become attainable and then we will have to defend Transylvania at gunpoint [...] Being in this situation, we neglect the defence of Transylvania. [...] The Szeklers County hardly has an armed force and there are not enough railroads to move the armed forces just in case." As a first measure, they requested that a railroad between Odorhei and Miercurea Ciuc be built as soon as possible.

On May 8, 1914, both newspapers in Cluj announced that a delegation from the Odorhei County and the city of Odorheiu Secuiesc paid an official visit to the Defence Committee of the Parliament, to the Prime Minister István Tisza and to the War Minister, Samu Hazai. The newspaper *Újság* No. 105 of May 8, 1914, under the headline "Protection of Transylvania required in parliament", reported that the delegation urged the moving of an infantry regiment to the town and that the army was asked to begin immediately the construction of fortifications in Transylvania, as a precautionary measure against Romania's possible attack. The news published in *Ellenzék* No. 103 of May 8, 1914 showed that the delegation requested the strengthening of the borders, stating that they were not directed against Romania, as the fortifications on the Italian border were not directed against the Italian ally.

The newspaper *Újság* No. 106 of May 9, 1914 published a column highly critical of the monarchy authorities:

What does Vienna do, why does the army supported by the Transylvanian taxpayers' money and sons not build fortifications along the threatened borders of Transylvania? [...] We think we are big and strong and we believe that we have a large army. We think we can slap little Romania when the time comes. But remember how the small Balkan states, Serbia and Montenegro, recently mocked the Monarchy's army [...] We demand that fortifications be built and troops be located in Transylvania. We are concerned for our land, but if we lose Transylvania, this is the end of the monarchy as well. If the Habsburgs are not concerned about our defence, let them at least think about defending their own power. [...] Today we are not yet in a position to be afraid of a possible uprising of the Romanians. But who knows what the future will bring. Last year no one thought of such a possibility, but now one who visits the Romanian villages will be amazed at the changes. And these changes are due only to Tisza's Romanian policy [...].

During the following days, the discussion on the need to fortify Transylvania continued. The newspaper *Újság* No. 107 of May 10, 1914, published a column citing a deputy of Armenian origin in Dumbrăveni, named Viktor Issekutz, who stated that Transylvania does not need fortifications, for "if Transylvania doesn't have an effective army, then no fortress could defend the interests of the Monarchy in Transylvania against Romania". "We could build a hundred fortresses in Transylvania" – the deputy said – "if we are not able to defend them, the Transylvanian land is inevitable loss in favour of Romania." The article also cited Count Mihály Károlyi saying: "If the Monarchy fortified the border against the allied Italy, then it can also do it against the «friend» Romania, because the Monarchy is not loved there either". Count Gyula Andrássy had an equivocal opinion stating: "There is no need for fortifications. I am convinced that in a serious situation, Romania will be on our side. I believe that strengthening the border with Romania would not be against Romania [...] the border fortresses and fortifications in Transylvania could be in Romania's interest [...] in case of a war with Russia, Romanian troops could find support in the fortifications in Transylvania. The fortifications could only be useful if, in case of a world war, Romania remained neutral or were against us".

The next day, in the newspaper *Újság* No. 108 of May 11, 1914, the topic was revisited in the column, this time stating that "strengthening Transylvania's borders with fortifications would not be directed against Romania [...] but against attacks from Odessa". The author continues: "Romania is as much a distress for the double monarchy as a field mouse for a farmer; it may cause damage, but it does not harm the integrity of the estate".

The newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 107 of May 13, 1914 returned to this topic with another long article. Under the heading "Transylvania is in danger" it showed that

the cities in Transylvania demanded ever more bluntly the establishment of military garrisons. "In The Szeklers' County there are only two Honvéd companies and a company of the joint army, while the Romanian army can be brought close to the border by train, at the Oituz and Tulgheş passes. In those circumstances, the Romanian army could occupy the Szeklers' County with no effort". The issue of the security of the railways came up, showing that "the military support from the centre of the country could be sabotaged, given that all the railways pass through Romanian territories". As an example, they mentioned the railways in Galicia and Romania, which were guarded by the army, as opposed to Transylvania, where each railway route was guarded only by two gendarmes.

In late May, less than a month before the Sarajevo assassination, the newspaper *Újság* No. 125 of May 31, 1914, in a long article entitled "Organizing defence in Transylvania", stated that the military and political authorities had abandoned Transylvania: "the Austro-Hungarian alliance cannot ensure our security before our external and internal enemies. The lack of security is paralyzing our creative forces." As a local measure, a movement called the Transylvanian Alliance (*Erdélyi Szövetség*) was initiated, led by Professors István Apáthy, Béla Kenéz, Béla Posta and the noble Miklós Torma. Their manifesto, among other things, says that "nowadays the slogan 'Let us defend Transylvania' must be a serious incentive [...]" It was a serious issue before, for those who were aware of the danger Transylvania is in, but only a few have realized the threatening seriousness of the actual situation". As a first step for the self-defence of the Hungarians, the Transylvanian Alliance stated the union of the Transylvanian Hungarian political forces in order to speed up those measures that the political leaders did not take after 1867, after the unification of Transylvania with Hungary.

The Alliance's Manifesto noted the following security issues:

- None of the ten passes over the Carpathians was fortified.
- There were no railroads leading to a series of passes over the mountains.
- Sibiu, the Transylvanian army centre, where most of the weapons and ammunition were kept, was near the border with Romania and was defended only by some 2,000 soldiers.
- Of the total number of 500,000 soldiers of the Monarchy, in Transylvania there were only about 13,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry endowed with only 150 cannons.
- In some cities, such as Zlatna, Câmpeni and others, considered Romanian centres, the Hungarian population lacked weapons for emergencies.

The newspaper *Újság* No. 128 of June 5, 1914 returned to the topic of the fortifications in Transylvania. An article announced a meeting in Târgu Mureş where "the Transylvanian Hungarians concerned with self-defence will decide the steps to defend the homeland." Another article in the same issue of the paper, entitled "The opinions of the military about the fortification of Transylvania", stressed

that the idea of fortifying Transylvania did not come from military circles, but from the citizens feeling insecure. Among the many arguments in favour of building the fortifications, one may note the one stating that during the Balkan War only the fortifications stopped the Bulgarian army from occupying Constantinople.

The newspaper *Újság* No. 131 of June 9, 1914 published a story about “The large gathering of Hungarians in Târgu Mures”. Among the published speeches, that of Gábor Ugron, president of the Alliance of Transylvania, is of interest. He stated: “We’re going down under the burden of military expenditures and Transylvania still has no army. We are handed over to our enemies. [...] Aurel Vlad said in Alba Iulia that “in ten years’ time, a Romanian government will lead Transylvania» and the Hungarians are defended only by gendarmes, instead of the Hungarian government. [...] We must defend Transylvania [...] the society must ally if the state cannot”.

Miklós Torma, another Alliance leader, said among other things: “If we fortified the border with Italy, which is considered a friendly state, then we are entitled to ask for the fortification of the Transylvanian borders [...] Austria and Germany could have convenient political interests for which to trade Transylvania [...] Even if Austria offers Trieste, Trentino and Bucovina, even if Germany gives the French Alsace and Lorraine, we cannot bring into discussion the renouncement to Transylvania [...] In Romania the national consciousness has grown to such an extent, that they will position against us militarily with the first opportunity which might occur”.

The Hungarians’ feeling of physical fear also occurs in other articles. The column of the newspaper *Újság* No. 109 of May 13, 1914, under the title “Let us be defended”, reported the case of a Hungarian-language school based on a land located in a village inhabited mostly by Romanians, but without further specifications of which village it was. They quoted a teacher at this school, who was concerned about the attitude of the Romanians in the village, saying that in order to defend their lives it would be better if the government provided them guns.

The Sarajevo assassination and the spectre of an outbreak of a world war

IN THE spring of 1914, the Cluj newspapers only presented a few scattered clues showing that there was a concern over the possibility of an outbreak of a world war. One small clue regarding the events to come is a short story published on page 6 of the newspaper *Újság* of May 3, 1914, announcing that, around June 23, the Crown Prince Francis Ferdinand would make a trip to Bosnia.

Judging by the texts published in the Cluj newspapers, the Sarajevo assassination produced relatively little excitement.

On Sunday, June 28, 1914, the newspaper *Újság* announced the news of Franz Ferdinand's death in a special edition. The news of the Crown Prince and his wife's death was published in large letters, along the first brief news on the assassination.

The next day, the news appeared again on the front page of *Újság* No. 148 of June 29, 1914. In the column telling what was known at the time on the assassination, what draws our attention is the opinion expressed by the author, who wrote: "We live our life with sorrow, many sufferings, uncertainty and worries. For a long while – in addition to other unfortunate circumstances – we must also live every day with the possibility of a world war". Among other things, the column pointed out the following main ideas: the old king is the guarantor of peace; the Crown Prince was not killed in any peoples' revolution, but by an anonymous murderer; the Serbs can be blamed for the assassination. On page 4 of the newspaper, we find the reactions of the Cluj inhabitants to the news of the assassination. The first news reached Cluj on Sunday afternoon, at around 4.15, the first rumour reaching the major cafes in the centre of the city, which had telephone lines with Budapest. No one believed the news at first, only after the local newspapers received police permission and after it became possible to print the news, since it was Sunday, a public holiday. The local newspapers printed extra editions and the public opinion learned about the tragic event. Local officials decided to suspend the theatrical performance scheduled for that evening.

The next day, the newspaper *Újság* No. 149 of June 30, 1914 commented the assassination in harsh terms. The question was asked how the police and the Crown Prince's bodyguards could have been so negligent, since no policeman was on that street when the attack took place. The safety measures in Cluj a few days before were recalled, when the first-minister István Tisza walked in the centre of Cluj among policemen dressed in civilian clothes. On page 2 of the newspaper it was said that the previous day's excitement faded, only the black flag from public institutions and the suspension of theatre performances reminding of the assassination.

Between the time of the Sarajevo assassination and the declaration of war, the columns and political commentaries in the Cluj newspapers had as a main topic the futility of war. My opinion is that the most interesting political comments were published during this period. People felt that war was very possible, even very close, and the journalists bluntly stated opinions against the war. They argued that the war should not start because it could bring nothing good for the Empire, that the Monarchy was not ready and that the Monarchy must use its forces to stop the centrifugal tendencies starting from the heart of the country.

Five days after the attack, the newspaper *Újság* No. 151 of July 2, 1914 confronted with the imminent danger of the outbreak of war, published a column criticizing in very harsh terms the Monarchy's policy in the Balkans. Entitled "The Habsburgs' Drama", it said:

The cause for Francis Ferdinand's drama was the violation of common sense. The Balkans belong to those who live in the Balkans [...] what was the dual monarchy, like a conqueror, doing in the Balkans? [...] through the annexation of Bosnia, the order in the Balkans was harmed and the people in Bosnia were offended, which was not asked about the annexation either by the Hungarian legislator or by the Austrian legislator [...] for this, poor Francis Ferdinand and his wife had to die. Through the annexation, an ancient Serbian land was attached to the monarchy [...] little Serbia cried and mourned because of the annexation [...] but was unable to do anything, being left alone in front of the 50 million people Monarchy [...] Moreover, in its frivolous stupidity, Hungary has mocked Serbia and its mourning of the loss of Bosnia. We should have known that losing the Bosnian land hurts the Serbians as much as Hungary would be hurt if it lost Transylvania. I wonder how we, the Hungarians, would feel if someone mocked the pain felt for the loss of Transylvania [...] but in Hungary no one sees this cause: neither the press, nor the public opinion, nor the parliament. And because no one sees it: this blindness could be fatal to Hungary!

The newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 146 of July 2, 1914 wrote:

We must admit that the martyr in Sarajevo was a good man [...] blessed with a God-given talent [but] this damn Monarchy is like a mosaic [...] if the pieces are held together it looks nice, but each item wishes to get away, everyone wants to be on their own [...] until now, only high politics held together these pieces and the high politics believes they will succeed to keep them together for eternity! [...] The royal bloodbath in Sarajevo is a sign for all of us! Now we know we cannot expect anything from the high politics [...] the mosaic country is boiling [...] and the national question is the fire that keeps it boiling [...] it is very sad that the first victim was the very man who could have kept a check on the flaming passions.

In the following days the prospect of an outbreak of war has become the main topic. The journalists in Cluj argued desperately against this option. The newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 149 of July 6, 1914 published a column entitled "Incitement to war", which was actually a firm manifesto against war. It is worth being cited, because it shows us the attitude of the Hungarian population:

No, we do not want to go to war! We earnestly protest against the war. Neither our feelings, nor our thoughts prompt us to line up and partake in criminal battles. We are the offspring of the twentieth century, people who feel and think in a humane way. [...] war will not punish culprits, but

will cause suffering of the innocent [...] what happened in Sarajevo is a heinous crime [...] the perpetrators must certainly pay for their crimes. But as great as our loyalty is [...] we believe that this murder and crime against the royal family cannot lead to the killing of hundreds of thousands of people [...] people should not be taken to the slaughterhouse [...] let there be retaliation, but not war. Diplomacy must find another solution, because the guilty could be punished in other ways, too.

The column in the newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 151 of July 8, 1914 is even more categorical:

We do not want war! [...] Because the heir prince was shot, the Monarchy looks like it lost his head [...] many call for war [...] We do not belong in Serbia. Nobody wants to conquer Serbia. Hungary was not interested in conquering Bosnia and has no incentive to reach war [...] we protest against any plan for war, that would only push this unhappy nation down the path of poverty. [...] We need peace and quiet so we can solve our internal problems [...] by analysing facts calmly and seriously, we should conclude that they want to take us apart [...]. Serbia wants Bosnia, Russia wants Galicia, Italy wants to expand to Trieste. The Czechs want to break away from Austria and the German Austrians gravitate towards the German Empire. There is only one fixed point in this motley Monarchy: Hungary. If the Hungarian king agrees, we will overcome by ourselves the danger coming from the Romanians and the Croats [...] we, the Hungarians, must prepare for when the enemies of the Monarchy will swoop to divide us, so that we at least save ourselves, if we cannot stop Austria to unravel.

On July 23, the danger of the outbreak of war becomes more pressing. In a column entitled "Before big storms", the newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 164 of July 23, 1914 writes:

We are afraid of war. Let's be honest and voice the concerns in our hearts: we are afraid of war. [...] In this unhappy country, war could hardly find something that can still be destroyed. The material assets in the country have squandered during the economic crisis that passed over us [...] This country does not want to conquer, it is not enchanted by imperialist dreams, doesn't want to annex Balkan territories [...] for years, all the powers of the monarchy were spent in arming. We are told that we need more troops, guns and better weapons [...] But only that people needs war that has accumulated wealth and power and cannot use it on its own ground. We need peace, a healthy internal peace.

In a column entitled “Let us rejoice that we are living”, the newspaper *Ellenzék* No. 166 of July 25, 1914 wrote:

It appears that the gentlemen want to go to war with Serbia. They are starting the war, as if the Monarchy is ready for it. [...] bankers in Vienna and Budapest, who were unable to help our failing industry, trades and finances during the economic crisis, now tell us that the huge economic sacrifices of a war will not affect the economy of the country. [...] People would emigrate if the gendarmes did not drive them back at the border [...] Here, in Hungary, no one wants a war against the Serbs [...] We have enough mess, so we don't need to go looking for it in Serbia. After the death of the heir couple, everyone minded their own business, convinced that Serbia cannot be identified with the murders. The situation could have been settled peacefully and it still can be. No need to drive the best sons of the fatherland to the slaughter. Serbia is not a neighbour dangerous for the nation of Hungary. [...] We, the Hungarians, have more dangerous enemies. Let's preserve our forces for that confrontation, which will surely occur. No Serbia, but Romania threatens the Hungarian nation. There is serious ongoing training against us, which is much more dangerous than the plot of two Serb students. [...] Unfortunately, under current conditions, the nation's voice is not heard in the parliament. War has nothing to do with what the nation wants. [...] Thousands of Hungarian boys will die because we are the only trustful members of the Monarchy. We will take anything, they can send us anywhere.

The day before the declaration of general mobilization, the newspaper *Újság* No. 173 of July 26, 1914 discussed the news – proven false – that in the Cluj railway station police had found a wagon full of weapons and ammunition sent from Bucharest to the Greek Catholic archpriest of Cluj. We believe it was a story fuelled by the collective psychosis of the ethnic tensions. It was not an isolated story. During the previous months, there were often reports, some of them downright extravagant, about clandestine arms shipments from Romania to the Transylvanian Romanians.

After war was declared, the two major issues, namely the Romanian issue and the anti-war attitude, disappeared from newspapers, which only discussed about the moral duty of all citizens of the Monarchy. After August 3, 1914, news about the declarations of loyalty of Romanian leaders to the monarchy started being published. For example, on August 3, they published the declaration of loyalty from the Romanians in Deva, on August 4, from Teodor Mihaly, on August

5, from the Greek Catholic Bishop of Oradea, on August 6, from the priests and teachers of the Greek Catholic diocese in Cluj, on August 8, from Miron Cristea, the Orthodox Bishop of Caransebeș and so on. Along with these declarations of loyalty from Romanian leaders, news was published about Romanians who refused to enlist in the Monarchy army and statements of Romanians saying they were waiting for the Russian Czar to come, to take his side.

These were only secondary topics. On the first page of the newspapers, news began to be published about military events, mobilization and military trains leaving for the front. On August 13, the newspaper *Újság* published the false news that the army had promised the ultimate victory to the old king on his birthday, on August 18, 1914. On the same day, the newspaper wrote: "eight nations and about 15-20 million people are in arms. This war will not end in a month or two..."

In conclusion, we can show that the two Hungarian language daily newspapers published in Cluj in the spring and summer of 1914 show a Hungarian community very concerned by the Romanian issue. The Romanian society in the historic Transylvania, Banat, Maramureș and the so-called Partium (or Crișana), in addition to being the largest ethnic community in the territories mentioned, followed ever more determined national goals contrary to the wishes of the Hungarians. The Hungarian community in Cluj watched very closely the Romanian cultural or political events both in Hungary and Romania. Newspaper columns and other articles show that before the outbreak of the World War I, the Hungarian community in Cluj deemed that the Romanians represented the greatest threat to the territorial integrity of Hungary. The concern that Romania will attack Hungary and rip off Transylvania was higher than the concern for the outbreak of war with Russia, for example, or any other great power.

The fact that Romania had gained an important international prestige after the Balkan wars made the strengthening of the Transylvanian borders a main concern for the Hungarians.

The newspaper articles suggest that an economic crisis had seriously affected the eastern territories of the two-headed Monarchy, particularly the small households and craftsmen from Transylvania. It was to this economic crisis that the massive emigration from Transylvania was blamed on, which was emphasized by the frequent publishing of statistical data on the number of those working in particular on the American continent.

Following the Sarajevo assassination, the imminent outbreak of a world war became apparent. In the weeks that followed the assassination, the main concern of the Hungarian newspapers in Cluj was to convey the idea that Hungarians did not want war, because there was no Hungarian national interest in taking part in such a war.

The increasingly serious ethnic problems, the new electoral law and the economic crisis were the main reasons for which the vast majority of Transylvanian

Hungarians felt that the government led by Count István Tisza had a wrong policy, directed against the Hungarian national interests.

At the outbreak of war, the texts regarding the Romanian issue and the pacifist texts stopped. The columns and commentaries stated that henceforth all citizens must fulfil their obligations to the king and to the homeland.

The state of facts suggested by the articles in the two Hungarian daily newspapers in Cluj shows a tensioned interethnic coexistence in Transylvania and the premonitions about the future sometimes anticipated with an almost surprising accuracy the historical events at the end of the war.

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"BETWEEN THE GAME AND THE WAR": CHILDREN'S PATRIOTISM IN ODESSA DURING THE GREAT WAR (1914-1917)



DZHUMYHA YEVHEN

Abstract

The First World War, named the Total War, revolutionary changed the conditions of children's life in belligerent countries. We can observe mass patriotic enthusiasm among them. It was caused by propaganda. The main instruments of it were the church, the press, the school, the entertainments etc. Therefore, charity activity of the juvenile (gathering of food, money, clothes, gifts for wounded soldiers in Odessa and combatants in the front line) and battle experience of the children (ways to the front, honours, public opinion, wounded children, etc.) are analysed in the article.

Keywords

First World War, children, patriotism, propaganda, image of the enemy

WORLD WAR I, known as “Great war” and “Total War”, had a great significance for the world history not only in political aspect, but also in the context of everyday life and social history. The distinctive feature of the First World War was its total influence on the whole groups of belligerent countries. Women and men, adults and children, beggars and merchants – all of them were involved in this war. Hunger, cold, lack of food and fuel, charity activity, patriotism, mobilization became a part of the civilian dwellers’ life. In all historical epochs the least protected groups of population during the war were the children and the women. The famous Ukrainian writer Olga Kobylyanskaya (1863-1942) said in despair, in the essay dated 1917, that the war hadn’t divided humanity into irreconcilable countries, but into the “island of men” and the “island of women, children and old men”¹.

English historians Peter Gatrell and Mark Harrison wrote: “(...) in both world wars, the war potential of any country, taken in isolation, depended on basic economic factors determined by size and level of economic development, but the degree to which war potential was realized depended on a variety of factors many of which lay outside economics”². Indeed, any war requires not only efficient disciplined army, talented generals and powerful economic base. One of the key elements is the ideological basis, the loyalty of military and civilians. Therefore, propaganda and patriotism play an extremely important role in any war. They allow the government to shape public opinion and to have social support. The Russian researcher O. Senyavska notes that propaganda machine for the first time in history started to work so intensively and had such great impact on the people during World War I³. That is why not submarines, tanks or poison gas, but patriotism became the most dangerous weapon in this war.

Obviously, the most unprotected and receptive for propaganda group of society in any war is represented by children. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the problem of children’s patriotism in Odessa during the First World War.

The chronological frame of this article includes only the period of 1914-1917 because of the great impact of the February Revolution and the Civil war on the life and consciousness of the Russian Empire population, including children.

The theme of children’s patriotism is explored rather insufficiently in post-Soviet historiography unlike West European and American historiography. Some Ukrainian and Russian historians tried to analyse the problem of patriotism in the Russian Empire during the Great War, for example, researchers such as

1. М. Богачевська-Хомяк. *Білим по білому. Жінки в громадському житті України 1884-1939* (Київ: 1995), с. 172–173.
2. Peter Gatrell and Mark Harrison, “The Russian and Soviet Economies in Two World Wars: A Comparative View”, *The Economic History Review*, vol. 46, no 3, (1993): 426.
3. Елена Сеньявская. *Противники России в войнах XX века: Эволюция «образа врага» в сознании армии и общества*, (Москва: Российская политическая энциклопедия, 2006), с.63.

B. Kolonitskiy, E. Seniavskaya, O. Olievskiy, O. Reient⁴. But they don't focus their attention on the children and illuminate children's patriotism in the context of general questions.

It is necessary to mention that foreign historians give more attention to this topic, for instance American and European historians such as E. Lohr, F. J. Hubertus, P. Blake, D. Welch, D. Silbey, and others⁵. But their works as usual aren't devoted to propaganda and patriotism in the Russian Empire.

The main sources of this research are Odessa newspapers ("Odessa News", "Odessa Sheet", and the most valuable newspaper for children "Children's sheet"). Ego-documents are very important too, for example, memoirs of the famous Soviet writer Y. Olesha, theatre director V. Galitskii, Polish refugee B. Kosovski⁶. Official documents orders, appeals, instructions and other documents from Ukrainian archives (Odessa, Kiev), because of the great role of state institutions, like educational system, in the constructing of patriotic feelings were used too.

Undoubtedly, the main instrument of civic mobilization was propaganda. But the ways of propaganda were varied for different groups of the society. Therefore, we can distinguish factors of propaganda for children such as family, education, entertainment (theatre, cinema, newspapers and books for children etc.). The main results of propaganda we can observe in charity, public events such as manifestations, and battlefield experience of the Odessa children. Consequently, we will try to illuminate these questions.

As historian Raphael Samuel points out, patriotism is something 'very often, which is thrust upon us'. The main topics of war cultural products were enemy,

4. Борис Колоницкий. «Трагическая эротика»: образы императорской семьи в годы Первой мировой войны (Москва: Новое литературное обозрение, 2010); О. Олієвський. "Діти під час Першої світової війни 1914–1918 рр.: соціально-психологічний аспект", *Перша світова війна: історичні долі народів Центральної та Східної Європи: матеріали Міжнародної наукової конференції, присвяченої 80-річчю Буковинського народного віча* (Чернівці, 22–24 вересня 1998 р.), Чернівці, 2000, с. 297 – 299; Олександр Реєнт і Олександр Сердюк. *Перша світова війна і Україна*, (Київ: Генеза, 2004); Елена Сенявская. *Противники России в войнах XX века: Эволюция «образа врага» в сознании армии и общества*.
5. P. Blake. "The Development of Public Opinion in Russia during the War", in *The Scientific Monthly*, vol. 5, no 3 (1917): 210–228; Jahn F. Hubertus. "Patriots or Proletarians? Russian Workers and the First World War", in *Workers and Intelligentsia in Late Imperial Russia: Realities, Representations, Reflections*, edited by Reginald E. Zelnik, (Berkeley: University of California, 1999), 330–347; Eric Lohr. *Nationalizing the Russian Empire. The campaign against enemy aliens during World War I*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003); D. Silbey. *The British Working Class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914–1916*, London – New York: Frank Cass, 2005; D. Welch. *Germany, Propaganda and Total War, 1914–1918* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000).
6. M. Sawicki. "Bohdana Kossowskiego wspomniena z pobytu w Odessie 1915–1918", *Поляки на півдні України та в Криму*, Одеса–Ополе–Вроцлав, 2007. – с. 391–398; В. Галицкий, *Театр моей юности*, Ленинград: Искусство, 1984; Юрий Олеша. "Ни дня без строчки" в *Избранное* (Москва: Правда, 1983), с. 329–621.

victims, allies, the “Russian soul” and the meaning of the war⁷. And, probably, the theme of the enemy was the most important and widespread.

Russian sociologist L. Gudkov writes that an enemy is a factor that mobilizes all members of the community to unite around the authority that guarantees security conditions and salvation from the threat of destruction. That is why the creation of the enemy’s image is very important in any war⁸.

It should be noted that propaganda created both “external enemies” (the Austrian, German, Turkish soldiers) and “domestic enemies” (the Russian Germans and Jews).

The periodical press became one of the main sources about the war and it stimulated patriotic feelings. A lot of information about the war was published in the newspapers: news about the victories of the enemy and allied troops, battlefield, soldiers and prisoners of life, charity, the impact of war on the economy, and so on.

Children could read newspapers with their parents or by themselves. For example, the theatre director V. Galickiy met the First World War in Odessa at the age of seven. In his memoirs he wrote about his feelings about the manifest of the beginning of the war:

*“Everyone read the tsar “Manifest”. I also took a newspaper. “We” instead of “I”, countless titles – “the king of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland and other and other”, pompous patriotic words affected me excitingly, I suddenly felt hate for the Germans, “who had invaded our territory”.”*⁹.

Children read not only adult press. During the period of the First World War there were some special newspapers for children. For example, “Child Sheet” and “Joy of the Children”.

O. Senyavska notes that the enemy must be “bad” because killing a man is below the generally accepted norms of human morality. In the public mind, an enemy gets the negative features. An enemy was always a “barbarian”, he attributed to a variety of human weaknesses - drunkenness, looting, aggression, fornication, etc¹⁰.

Therefore, a lot of the materials on the pages of child newspapers were devoted to the war and image of the enemy. Germans were portrayed as ignorant, aggressive and warlike nation¹¹. On the other hand, the editors tried to portrait the main enemy of the Russian Empire as miserable cowards. The Germans became the heroes of cartoons, jokes, puzzles and so on. For example: “What is the word that

7. Richard Stites. “Days and Nights in Wartime Russia: Cultural Life, 1914-1917”, in *European Culture in the Great War The Arts, Entertainment, and Propaganda, 1914-1918*, (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 16.

8. Лев Гудков. “Идеологема «врага». «Враги» как массовый синдром и механизм социокультурной интеграции” в *Образ врага*, Москва: ОГИ, 2005, с.14.

9. В. Галицкий. *Театр моей юности*, с.24.

10. Елена Сеньявская. *Противники России в войнах XX века. с.21-22.*

11. “Германия”, *Детский листок*, 1915, № 4, с. 2.

does not change when you are reading it backwards and all the Germans are afraid of it?"¹². The answer is Cossack¹³. On the whole an image of the Cossack played an important role in the propaganda. They always got victories over the enemy (the story of Kozma Kruchkov who killed 11 German soldiers himself). In another joke the German soldiers were afraid of bison and started shooting. As a result the animals killed some of them¹⁴.

There were also other ways of propaganda. The historian H. Jaan emphasizes that traditional methods of propaganda in the Great War were supplemented by more modern methods – cinema, postcards, photographs, posters, etc¹⁵.

Indeed, cinemas became widespread and popular in Odessa on the eve of the war. In this city, as in other places of the Russian Empire, cinemas showed films made by the Skobelyev Committee. They got permission to demonstrate films even during the Great Fast. As such, in February 1916 the "Colosseum", "Small" and "Express" theatres showed the film called "Under the Russian flag"¹⁶.

We can observe the increase of the number of working children in Odessa during the war. It can be assumed that the increasing number of working children had impact on their patriotic feelings, too. They communicate with adults more often and could hear the news about the war at work. Only in 1914, according to the reports of factory inspectors, the number of working teenagers in the Russian Empire enlarged by 3.8%, and the number of working young children by 3.7%¹⁷.

Undoubtedly, the school played a great part in the cultivation of patriotism. Teachers expressed rather contradictory ideas. On the one hand, children had to be protected from the horrors of war, and, on the other hand, they could get an opportunity to show their love for the Motherland. In 1915, A. Bogdanov wrote: "With a certain desire and ability, the high rise, which the people is now experiencing, should be used as a means of sending children to the light way of universal love and mercy"¹⁸. It should be noted that a similar situation was in other belligerent countries. Maureen Healy analysed the problem of children mobilization in Vienna. She wrote: "In reality, school was the state's chosen institution for mobilizing children for war"¹⁹. The historian used the term "school front".

12. "Задача-шутка", *Детский листок*, 1915, № 4, с. 4; "Шутки", *Детский листок*, 1915, № 1, с. 3.

13. In Russian "казак".

14. "Немцы и зубры", *Детский листок*, 1916, № 6, с. 3.

15. Jahn F. Hubertus. "Patriots or Proletarians?... ", p.334.

16. Держархів Одеської обл. (скорочено ДАОО), Ф. 13. Старший інспектор з нагляду за закладами друку і книжної торгівлі в м. Одесі. 1866–1917 рр., оп. 1, спр. 413. Листування з одеським градоначальником про демонстрацію кінокартин Скобелевського комітету для збору коштів інвалідам війни, 1916 р., арк.7.

17. *Свод отчетов фабричных инспекторов за 1914 год*, Петроград, 1915, с. XXXVIII.

18. А. Богданов. "Дети и война", *Нива*, 1915, № 11, с.209.

19. Maureen Healy. *Vienna and the fall of Habsburg Empire. Total war and everyday life in World War I*, Cambridge (UK), 2004, p. 241.

The campaign against Germany impacted the children's education. The beginning of the war caused the banning of the German organizations and newspapers in Odessa and the appearance of the problem of the German language. It was difficult to completely forbid German, because it was taught in schools and gymnasiums. In September 1914 the editorial board of the "Odessa paper" newspaper received a letter in which a mother complained that her children had been offended because they had used German outdoors. She wrote that this case was not unique and requested to stop boycotting German, or replacing it with English. Moreover, the author of the letter indicated that the children also supported the campaign against the German language²⁰.

The authorities of the Russian Empire did not only encourage, but also extorted students to take part in charitable activities and to support the front. As such, the minister of People Studying urged the leaders of the female secondary schools to involve their pupils in the manufacturing of clothes for soldiers²¹. The Head of the Odessa educational district, V. Smolianinov, called to involve students in charity²². He demanded the officers and directors of schools to organize maximum lessons of military training and shooting for boys²³. V. Galitski was a student of one of the Odessa schools at that time. He described these classes in the private school of Leonid Kovalchuk in his memories. V. Galitski said that teenagers were given rifles and were taught to march, and the younger students watched them with great envy²⁴.

The Ministry of Education recommended to give students medals for academic achievement with patriotic inscriptions: "Russian soldier - pride of Russia", "Russian capital - Slavic heroes", "In unity is power"²⁵. In April 1915 the Head of the Odessa school district proposed directors and inspectors to promote collections of patriotic poems "Wreath for the heroes" and "Holy Rus" among pupils. In his opin-

20. Ievgen Dzhumyga. "The Home Front in Odessa during the Great War (July 1914 – February 1917): the Gender Aspect of the Problem", *Danubius*, vol. XXXI (2013): 231-232.

21. "О привлечении учащихся в женских средних учебных заведениях к изготовлению белья для раненых воинов, 27 августа 1914 г., № 40665", в *Циркуляр по Одесскому учебному округу. Официальный отдел*, 1914, № 10, с.1352.

22. "Обращение Г. Попечителя Одесского Учебного округа, Гофмейстера ЕГО ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА В.Н. Смольянинова, 21 августа 1914 года", *Циркуляр по Одесскому учебному округу. Официальный отдел*, 1914, № 9, с.1268-1269.

23. "Г. г. начальствующим в учебных заведениях Округа, директорами и инспекторам народных училищ с некоторыми руководственными указаниями по учебным заведениям, вызванными чрезвычайными событиями последнего времени, переживаемыми Россией, 25 июля 1914 г., № 24532/5700, *Циркуляр по Одесскому учебному округу. Официальный отдел*, 1914, № 8, с. 1054.

24. В. Галицкий. *Театр моей юности*, с.34.

25. ДАОО, Ф. 47. Одеська міська громадська жіноча Маріїнська гімназія. 1878–1920 рр., оп. 1, Спр. 5694. Справа Одеської першої міської жіночої гімназії про приписи і розпорядження керівництва, 1916 р., арк.70.

ion these collections had to cultivate "flame national feelings" among the young generation²⁶.

The different patriotic meetings and evening parties at schools were used for supporting patriotic atmosphere, too. For instance, the programme of one of them included hymns (of the Russian Empire and Allies), patriotic poems and songs, lectures about the war, and so on. Almost all speeches contained ideas of pan-Slavism ("To the west Slavs", "The Slavic hymn", "Russia and Slavs", "Rise up, Galicia", etc.)²⁷.

On the eve of the war, children began to show their patriotic feelings in demonstrations on the streets of Odessa. In the evening of 17 July, the main street of the city was full of people carrying flags and portraits of the Russian emperor, of his heirs, the Serbian and Montenegrin kings. They visited the British and Greek consulates, shouting "Go off Austria", "Long live Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, France, England". They sang Russian and Serbian anthems. In some Odessa newspapers, we can read: "As usual, the main basis of the manifestation, the most active part of it is pliable teenagers"²⁸.

There were patriotic events only for children. As such, on 4 August 1914, the "South Thought" newspaper reported about the group of several hundred children who had held a demonstration in the city garden on the Deribasovskaya Street. While singing the anthem, children and adults shouted "Hurrah"²⁹.

Maureen Healy noted one feature of the Total war. She wrote that all everyday matters (food, leisure, shopping, fashion, and so on) had been considered through the lens of the war³⁰. Obviously, entertainment of children changed too. But it is difficult to define a degree of this impact.

The First World War changed the conditions of parenting considerably. Women, especially from the lower strata of the population, because of the employment and mobilization, had hardship in taking care of their children. A lot of women started looking for a job because the state and charity aid was not enough for the soldiers' families. According to the soviet historian M. Balabanov in 1914 about 4.9% of all workers in the Russian Empire were female, in 1915 – 10.2%, and in 1916 – 16.2%³¹. In Ukraine the number of the female workers increased

26. ДАОО, Ф. 42. Канцелярія попечителя Одеського учбового округу. 1834–1920 рр., оп. 35., Спр. 2802. Циркулярі і директиви попечителя Одеської навчальної округи і списки здобувачів вчительських посад, 1915 р., арк.26.

27. "Программа литературно-вокально-музыкального вечера 19 сентября 1914 г. в пользу раненых в Одесской 2 мужской гимназии", *Циркуляр по Одесскому учебному округу. Неофициальный отдел*, 1914, № 10, с.1389-1391.

28. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 17-18 июля.

29. *Южная мысль*, 1914, 5 августа.

30. M. Healy. *Vienna and the fall of Habsburg Empire*, 3.

31. М. Балабанов. *Царская Россия XX века (Накануне революции 1917 года)*, Харьков, Пролетарий, 1927, с. 69.

by 77%³². Undoubtedly, in Odessa, which was a large industrial city of South Ukraine, we can observe a significant growth in the number of working women. They amounted to about 40-50% even in the handling metal facilities³³. The employment became an opportunity to survive during the war.

Children often stayed alone and this led to tragic consequences. Heroic and romantic enthusiasm for war caused a veritable “epidemic” of children’s war entertainment. For example, in Odessa in the area near the refinery of the Olexandrivske Company a lot of workers’ children gathered to play like soldiers in the war. They used sticks and stakes instead of guns and swords. On the 16th of March about 200 boys took part in the game. One half of the children depicted the Germans and the others were the allies. Ivan Shpachenko who depicted a German Commander got serious injuries during the game. Then he was taken to the hospital³⁴.

Charity was one of the best ways for civilians to demonstrate their patriotism during the war. Assistance to the wounded soldiers, refugees, and families of died warriors became a duty for the Motherland.

The well-known teacher of that time E. Kovalevsky wrote that the children’s attitude to war had been immediate and similar to the farmers³⁵. Therefore, children were very sympathetic to the victims of the war.

The “Child Sheet” newspaper initiated a survey on children about them helping the Motherland. In some issues the newspaper published the answers of readers. For example, N. Kapulskyy believed that it was difficult to help alone, so he advised children to unite. L. Kleiman wrote that children should learn well and became good citizens³⁶. Readers Sheinin and Medresh offered free help to teach children from soldiers’ families and to organize performances and lotteries for them³⁷. The newspaper published the names of those who had donated money or offered to help in teaching younger children³⁸. No doubt that these publications encouraged children to further charitable activity.

Odessa periodicals published numerous cases of children’s charity. Usually, friends or classmates tried to help together. In June 1915, the office of the Odessa governor received money and a short letter from two schoolboys. The content of that note was:

“We, three pupils of Odessa gymnasiums, gathered our old toys and books that were played between our friends in home lottery for 1 kopeck per tick-

32. Й. Т. Щербина. *Робітничий клас України та його революційна боротьба у 1914 – 1917 роках*, Київ, 1963, с. 50.

33. *Отчет Одесского комитета торговли и мануфактуры за 1915 год*, Одесса, 1916, с. 131.

34. *Одесские новости*, 1916, 17 марта.

35. А. Богданов. “Дети и война”, с.209.

36. “Анкета”, *Детский листок*, 1915, № 4, с. 3.

37. “Детская отзывчивость”, *Детский листок*, 1915, № 2, с. 2.

38. “В пользу беженцев”, *Детский листок*, 1915, № 3, с. 4.

et. All proceeds we put into the closed box and gave it to Colonel for the assistance of wounded soldiers and our dear defenders of the Motherland"³⁹.

In September of that year, the children of the house number 28 in Hradonachalnytskay St. organized a lottery with toys and their own performance on the motives of the poem "Poltava" and several fables. They donated all the money (9 rubles. 9 cop.) orphans who had suffered from war⁴⁰.

Odessa newspapers often published examples of children assistance. The "Small Odessa News" newspaper published an article with the title "Sign of a time". It described the boys who had found 5 kopecks. They couldn't divide them, and then decided to donate the money for the Polish refugees⁴¹.

At the beginning of the war, Odessa schoolgirls began to make bandages for the wounded soldiers⁴². Pupils from another school organized the gathering of sugar for soldiers. During only one day they managed to collect 300-400 pieces of sugar, or 6 pounds⁴³. Even the children from the city shelter decided to donate their Christmas money for the soldier's warm clothes⁴⁴.

There is, however, a question about the sincerity of all pupils in these school patriotic actions. It is necessary to allocate some archive documents – orders of the Head of the Odessa educational region to prepare gifts for the refugees and the wounded soldiers. These orders were sent to the directors of all Odessa schools and gymnasiums. One of them (November 1914) included an instruction of gathering Christmas gifts for soldiers. There was advice to put salt, cigarettes, pencils, postcards, wooden spoons, sugar, chocolate, and so on. The Head of the Odessa educational region noted that the number of the pupils must be equal to the number of gifts. Therefore, this gathering was imperative for all children⁴⁵. Later the instructions were not so strict. For example, in 1916 the Head demanded only 20-25 gifts from one school and he advised pupils to take part in the process of giving these gifts⁴⁶. This was probably caused by two factors: 1) the weakening of patriotic raising 2) the falling of living standards because of the inflation and a price rise.

Children and teenagers of Odessa did not limit their participation in the war only by demonstrations and assistance to wounded soldiers and refugees. They

39. Одесский листок, 1915, 21 июня.

40. Маленький одесский листок, 1915, 26 сентября.

41. Маленький одесский листок, 1915, 7 августа.

42. Одесский листок, 1914, 3 сентября.

43. Одесский листок, 1914, 19 сентября.

44. Одесский листок, 1914, 22 декабря.

45. ДАОО, Ф. 42. Канцелярия попечителя Одесского учебного округа. 1834–1920 pp., оп. 35., спр. 2802. Циркуляри і директиви попечителя Одеської навчальної округи і списки здобувачів вчительських посад, 1915 р., арк. 129.

46. ДАОО, Ф. 47. Одеська міська громадська жіноча Маріїнська гімназія. 1878–1920 pp., оп. 1., спр. 5694 Справа Одеської першої міської жіночої гімназії про приписи і розпорядження керівництва, 1916 р., арк. 225.

wanted to get to the front and take part in real battles. Military romance and patriotism that involved almost all groups of the population caused massive flight of children to the front line. In August 1914, numerous reports about runaway children appeared in the pages of the city newspapers⁴⁷. In September, their number had increased significantly. In only one day the police received five applications from parents of children who had run to the front⁴⁸. As usual, children and teenagers organized their escapes by small groups (2-3 friends, classmates or brothers)⁴⁹.

Not only boys but girls tried to get to the army, too. As a rule, they wanted to become nurses and help wounded soldiers⁵⁰. Even the cadets of the Odessa Military College ran to the front, despite the fact that soon they could get there officially. According to one of the students of the P. Ustinov College, the reason for this was the difficulties of trainings and studying. He wrote: "not everybody could endure role of the cadet"⁵¹.

It should be noted the significant increase of escapes in autumn and in spring. That was the time when lessons and exams began in the schools. In the "Odessa Small Sheet" newspaper, in July and August 1915, only 3 and 5 articles were published about escaping children. In September, however, their number increased to fifteen⁵². Obviously, running to the front was a way to avoid studying at school. However, not all of the pupils tried to get away from school. For some of them it was a very important decision. For example, a twelve-years-old girl always repeated that she would run to the front, but only after passing the exams at school⁵³.

The community's attitude to these escapes is a very important aspect. Children at the beginning of the war got to the front without any serious problem⁵⁴. One of the young volunteers said, in an interview to the correspondent of the Odessa newspaper: "at the beginning of a campaign young volunteers were not pursued as now".

However, a major part of children were stopped by the police and sent home. For example, three boys were detained in Zhmerynka on 26 September 1914. They had a terrible appearance, were hungry and without shoes⁵⁵.

The success of the planned escape depended on soldiers who helped them. As usual, children got to the front by military trains. Some soldiers set down children

47. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 16 августа.

48. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 26 сентября.

49. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 3 ноября, 13 декабря.

50. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 18 августа; *Одесский листок*, 1915, 15 мая.

51. С. М. Устинов. *Записки начальника контрразведки*, Белград: Всеславянский книжный магазин М. И. Стефанович и К^о, 1922, с.16.

52. *Маленький одесский листок*, 1915, июль-сентябрь.

53. *Маленький одесский листок*, 1915, 5 мая.

54. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 13 сентября; *Одесский листок*, 1915, 16 марта.

55. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 27 сентября, 22 декабря.

immediately, but others took children to the front. We can maintain the idea according to which society accepted the fact of children in the army.

For example, the "Odessa Sheet" newspaper published an article about a group of teenagers who was stopped and detained from the wagon. But they said that they wanted to be helpful at the front. As a consequence, the soldiers changed their decision and took the children with them⁵⁶. The famous Russian philosopher V. Rozanov wrote about how soldiers told his fifteen years old son that he could get to Warsaw and then to the front with their help⁵⁷.

If the children were caught, they tried not to return home. Therefore, when seventeen-years-old boys were detained in Kiev, they told the wrong home address in order not to be sent back to Odessa⁵⁸. It should be noted that those children and teenagers who had already been on the front and returned home, got to the front for the second time without any problems. Even twelve-year-old boys had the opportunity to return in the army without serious problems⁵⁹.

We can safely assume that the Odessa newspaper didn't condemn the military experience of the children. In the press, young soldiers were portrayed as real heroes. Perhaps this was because of the general wave of patriotism. Examples of children on the front had to motivate adults to go to the army.

A different approach is presented in the "Child Sheet" newspaper. There were a lot of materials about the problem of children on the front. In September 1915, in the first issue of the newspaper, examples of children on the front line were condemned. It was noted that children in the army couldn't be useful, but they only prevented adults to carry out their duties⁶⁰.

The newspaper published letters from the children, who condemned escapes to the front. There was a poem about a boy Petya who ran to the front, but he had to return home. Some lines of the poem show us the specific point of view of the author. He condemned the escaping of the boy to the front. On the other hand, the author considered his action as noble because of the Pieter's motive – «love and faith» to the Motherland⁶¹.

There is no doubt that the state propaganda was the catalyst of the escaping children to the front. However, there were other important reasons. One of them is the features of their characters at this age. Children wanted adventures and dreamed to be heroes. Young wounded soldiers tried to show their bravery and absence of fear. For example, a thirteen-year-old soldier said in an interview that he got into the habit with the noise of cannons and bullets so much that he

56. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 13 сентября.

57. В. Розанов. В чад войны, Петроград-Москва: Рубикон, 1916, с.4.

58. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 24 сентября.

59. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 8 октября.

60. "Война и дети", *Детский листок*, 1915, № 1, с.2.

61. "Доброволец", *Детский листок*, 1915, № 7, с. 2.

stopped fearing them all. His twelve-year-old comrade was wounded by a shrapnel in the leg. And he said that the war was not terrible, and the leg had not been hurt⁶².

Obviously, the battle experience of children had negative consequences for their future life. The Russian researchers I. Kanaev and P. Shcherbinin noted that the atmosphere of war, full of murders, robbery and other horrors, damaged morality and psychical health of the children⁶³.

Therefore, we can draw some conclusions. Censorship was introduced and propaganda campaign began in Odessa after the beginning of the First World War. Mobilization of society and creation of the image of the enemy were their main aim. Not only the adults but also the children became the object of this propaganda. Authorities used such different instruments to create the image of the enemy and to involve children in the patriotic wave as newspapers, magazines, cinema, and school education and so on. Perception of the First World War by children depended on their families. Many children, however, remained without parental attention because of the growth of social problems. Germans were represented as cowards, traitors, and aggressive, extremely cruel soldiers in the press for children. Children perceived war as a game, an adventure. Therefore, boys and girls fled to the front line, especially in the autumn and spring. Society condemned this, but permitted the presence of children on the front. Soldiers often helped children to get to the front. In the home front, war games became popular among children. Children were involved in charity. It was not only their wish, but also their duty. Boys and girls prepared dressing materials, gathered sugar, money, warm clothes and so on.

62. *Одесский листок*, 1914, 3, 20 сентября.

63. И. Н. Канаев и П. П. Щербинин, "Дети-шпионы и русская контрразведка в период Первой мировой войны 1914-1918 гг.", в *Вестник Тамбовского университета*, 2008, № 8 (64), с.209.

ROMANIA IN 1915: NATIONAL INTEREST IN NEUTRALITY YEARS

Between Press Bribery,
Royal Hopes and Popular Expectations



ALINA-OLANA ȘMIGUN

Abstract

By 1915, the victory seemed far. Both the Central Powers and the Entente were searching for new allies, trying to convert still neutral states into combative ones, thus turning the tide of victory. Romania was situated at the crossing point of the three most important empires of the continent: Austria-Hungary, Russia and the Ottoman Empire. As a key player in the Balkans, it had to choose whether to join the Entente or the Central Powers, being bound to the latter by a secret and obsolete treaty. Internally, on the one hand, we have the press and the politicians, speculative, easily bribed by foreign interests, influential and persuasive on the public opinion. On the other hand, we have the large mass of people, clearly confused. Furthermore, the Royal Family, with a strong-willed Queen of Russian and British ancestry, and a German-born King, was torn between duty and loyalty. Romania's national interest could only be accomplished by a careful choice of the alliance.

Keywords

War press, Romanian Royal Family, 1915, public opinion

THE YEAR 1915 marks a turning point in the history of WWI. To all the enthusiastic crowds of young people that went to war in the summer of 1914, almost convinced that the war will be over by Christmas and they will return home, covered in glory, to the loving arms of their beautiful fiancées as the enrolment propaganda proudly advertised. Little did they know that three more Christmases were to pass before the war would finally be over¹.

Embittered by the harsh realities of the front, the loss of fellow brothers-in-arms, most of them childhood friends, soldiers gave up propaganda images of the enemy to start a personal grudge with the people on the other side of no man's land. The first use of poison gas at Ypres, in early spring, leaves the Christmas truce of 1914 as an almost unreal memory, dimmed by the ferocity of the new weapons. All was about to freeze, even of some important battles were fought on both the Western and Eastern fronts, with severe human losses. Hate begins to crumble in the trenches dug in the muddy Flanders fields, as static warfare replaces large infantry clashes. It is the year of the first uses of the new ways and weapons of war: submarine warfare, airplanes tangling in 'dog fights', Zeppelin bombardments, toxic gas. New allies join both sides, thus deepening the conflict. Each belligerent member of each Alliance has realized it has to make appeal to a national enrolment, on the home front and in the trenches, in order to sustain the war effort. Propaganda power is at its dawn, but what overwhelming role it is given to play! Enrolment, buying war bonds, volunteering as nurses, workshops for providing the soldiers with Christmas and Easter small presents, to keep up their morale, or to give them knitted wool scarves, socks and mittens, to keep them warmer in harsh trench conditions, keeping the nation's children aware of the great war unfolding just outside their childhood, almost indoctrinating them from humorous cartoons and games up to horrifying tales of the deeds of the enemy². Propaganda plays its part in most of the belligerent countries. Yet, the war is not fully extended to world scale. Both the Entente and the Central powers strive to attract more pawns in the game. Italy, neutral at the beginning, though almost secretly part of an obsolete alliance with the Central powers, will change, surprisingly for some, the alliance to fight on the Entente's side. Protected by the Russian kinship of Slavic language and Orthodox faith, Bulgaria makes the other surprising move in the game of alliances. With fresh recent sympathies for the Austria-Hungary and for Germany, it joins their side, forsaking the call of Slavic ancestry and fighting alongside the Ottoman Empire, its former sovereign. However, none of the new joiners appears to temper the balance in either of the belligerent sides.

1. Maria, Regina României, *Povestea vieții mele, (volumul II)* (Bucharest: Rao International Publishing Company, 2011), 376. (hereinafter *Povestea II*)
2. Pierre Brouland et Guillaume Doizy, *La grande guerre des cartes postales* (Paris: Editions Hugo Image, 2013), 9-49. (hereinafter *La grande guerre*)

Romania's entry. A former little state with medieval ancestry of dependence to the then strong, now crumbling Ottoman Empire, a former battlefield for Russian-Turkish wars, a former secret ally of the central powers like Italy, the still new small kingdom of Romania has seen some changes in the last 50 years. Passing from an Ottoman imposed ruling regime, with little continuity in power withheld at the highest level, to a regime controlled by all the Great European Powers but closely watched by Russia, casting its shadow even after the Crimean War, Romania gains its centralized stability under local political craftsmanship. A foreign prince on the throne, yet still vassal to the Ottoman Empire, gives Romania the chance to make it count. Bringing guarantees from both France, Romania's eternal great Latin sister, friend and ally, the cradle of knowledge and civilization for its thinly formed elites starting the first half of the 19th century, and Germany, this new European *enfant prodigue*, ever uprising and pushing to make itself visible and heard on the old Continent, for starters - prince Carol I, future king, will live to see its adoptive country breaking the shackles of dependence, become a promising young kingdom and, at times, even a local *balancer* and key player, especially to the end of his reign, in the times of the Balkan wars. A country at the gates of the Levant, Romania seems to have changed a lot during his 48-year long reign³. You may wonder why we make such a long introduction about Romania's situation and, given the chance, to add a spicy perspective – on its personality?

For the present study it is highly important to understand Romania's background in making a decision to join the war or not, and if it joined the war, on which side would that be?

Certainly, most of the decisions are taken at the highest level. Of course, in the early days of the 20th century, we cannot speak of a representative democracy, since voting is not yet universal and still based on income⁴. But there is a popular vibe that hums against Austria-Hungary, which shivers when it comes to Russian soldiers again in this country's villages. The nation's background is as important as its leaders' background. To make a brief comparison, French History museums dedicated to the WWI never present the story starting 28th June. Since historiography evolved so much as to surpass the narrow short sighted theories setting the blame of the German side or considering the WWI an accident caused by the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, French takes it back into late 19th century. The roots of the war lie in the Sedan defeat, which generated resentment in the French society and boastful rhetoric in the German one. Animosities were kept stubbornly high by the French press, and by a lot of propaganda instruments, from toys to school books, from enrolment posters to society games. These societies

3. David Sherman Spector, *România și Conferința de pace de la Paris – diplomația lui Ion I.C. Brătianu* (Iași: Editura Institutul European, 1995), 7.

4. Lucian Boia, *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească* (București: Humanitas, 2006), 55; (hereinafter *Istorie și mit*).

grow generations of born enemies, of children brought up with target practice contests and patriotic discourses about an undeserved defeat and surrender to a barbaric, proud nation. The same kind of mistake being made after the Peace Treaty in Versailles, when the intention of bringing Germany on its knees for never to rise again, was the exact and final result of all this animosity dating back to 1871⁵.

On the same lines, we need to understand the way the Romanian society and population were structured at the outbreak of the war, in order to shed some light upon its nowadays controversial actions following the July Crisis and the outbreak of the war.

In early August 1914, the Crown Council in Sinaia is the scene where all the political elites of Romania collide. There are members of each political party and of each political option of the moment: the pro-Entente, some for the love of France and England, diminishing Russia's menace, which indeed seems to fade against the despised Austria-Hungary. The Russophobes are pleading for Germany's cause and insist on the Bessarabian issue⁶. Some realize that this is going to be far greater than the recent Balkan War that Romania got involved into, and tend to support neutrality, since this seems to be not our fight, some argue, while others choose an expecting neutrality - waiting to see the unfolding of the events to come. Old king Carol is torn between the loyalty he has for his homeland and family and the duty he has to fulfil before his subjects⁷. Having no other supporters but old politician Petre P. Carp⁸, the king accepts the final conclusion of the Crown Council: neutrality.⁹

The entire society is boiling¹⁰ - some see in the war the chance to fulfil Romania's destiny: becoming Greater Romania. This national goal seems now at reach, since each of the belligerent blocks has some territories inhabited by a large Romanian population. Austria-Hungary has Transylvania and Bucovina, while Bessarabia has been under Russian rule for over a century.

As diplomatic negotiations go on in the open or more secretly, the society seems to be caught up in a serious debate. There are manifestations, usually ending in front of the belligerent embassies in Bucharest, which pay the price of war in a

5. *La grande guerre*, 9-49.

6. Glenn E. Torrey, "Rumania and the belligerents, 1914-1916", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 1, 3 (iul., 1966): 171.

7. Alexandru Marghiloman, *Note Politice, 1897-1924, vol. I (1897-1915)* (București: Ed. Institutului de arte grafice Eminescu, 1927), 230-235.

8. Ion Bulei, "P.P. Carp — Un aristocrat al politicii românești", *Magazin Istoric*, no. 11 (1999) <http://www.magazinistoric.itcnet.ro/>, data accesării: 06 iunie 2008;

9. Ion Mamina, *Consilii de Coroană* (București : Editura Enciclopedică, 1997), 31.

10. Mircea Vulcănescu, "Regele Ferdinand și războiul pentru întregirea neamului", în Nicolae Iorga, Mircea Vulcănescu, , Mihail Polihroniade, *Regii României: Carol I, Ferdinand, Carol al II-lea, Mihai I : o istorie adevărată* (București: Editura Tess Express, 1998), 81; (hereinafter *Regele Ferdinand*).

neutral country, having their windows stoned¹¹. Pro Entente feelings, especially Francophile, are manifested in the first days after the Crown Council. For example, on 24 July / 4 August 1914, when French citizens, residents of Bucharest, return to their homeland after mobilization, they are accompanied on their way to the North Railway Station by enthusiastic crowds waving flags of Romania and France and shouting: "Vive la France! Long Live Romania!" Even at cinemas people manifest sympathy for the French. Demonstrations are held in public places, the most active being the students, singing the march *Sambre et Meuse*. The stopping of the German advance on Marna, by French armies, is greeted enthusiastically in Bucharest, and *La Marseillaise* is sung on the streets¹².

The press continues to publish news from the front and from the diplomatic international scene. While chaos is ruling over Bucharest, the royal family is still at Peles Castle, their summer residence in Sinaia. The tensions in Bucharest are so high, the population is being quite convinced that the King will abdicate and Royal family is secretly planning to leave the country, thus depriving it from the security guarantees it provided by their mere presence and leaving it at the mercy of its powerful and greedy neighbours. These rumours are so powerful that Prince Ferdinand and Princess Marie are coming to Bucharest for short weekend visits in order to reassure the population that they are still present and they support Romania's cause¹³. During one of their visits to the capital, King Carol I dies in Sinaia, from a severe illness only aggravated by recent events. It is indeed the end of an era. Romania buries at Curtea de Arges together with the king, embodiment of a founding father for the country that it became during his long reign, all the hopes of those fervent Central powers supporters and for the most of the neutralists, it becomes quite clear that Romania will enter the war, as soon as it receives all the guarantees it needs.

The final days of 1914 are mixed up with the same public agitation and secret diplomatic mission sent to Italy and France in order to state Romania's claims in both territories and financial support for the war effort, since the neutrality gave the government the chance to analyze the military resources and to be aware of their shortage and obsolescence¹⁴.

It was therefore very important to sum up the frail ground Romania walked on at the beginning of the war: the public opinion was against the Central Powers

11. Valentin Hossu-Longin, *Monarhia Românească* (București: Editura Litera, 1994), 48-49.

12. Institutul pentru Studii Politice de Apărare și Istorie Militară, gral.maior (r) dr. Mihail E. Ionescu(coord.), *Românii la începutul Marelui Război – de la atentatul de la Sarajevo la moartea regelui Carol I* (București: Editura Militară, 2014), passim.

13. *Povestea II*, 376.

14. General Vasile Rudeanu, *Memorii din timpuri de pace și de război (1884-1929)*, Ediție îngrijită, studiu introductiv și note de Dumitru Preda și Vasile Alexandrescu (București: Editura Cavaliotti, 2004), 65-71.

by a large majority, and yet, Romania chose neutrality not only because it seemed the moral thing to do, but also because it was not yet ready for the new type of war lurking at its borders.

When speaking about the debate in choosing alliances in 1915 Romania, one cannot avoid talking about the way the three most important entities of the society: the press, the popular expectation and the royal family are relating to what seems to be on everybody's lips back in those days: Romania's national interest.

The Press

ON THE one hand, we have the press – the printed press that we can regard as the most free press Romania has ever had, free of censorship imposed by war or dictatorship. The newspapers, such as: *Convorbiri Literare*, *Viața Românească*, *Evenimentul*, *Dimineata*, *Universul*, *Lupta*, *Ziua* are spicing up the debate in coffee houses and in the streets, since some of them are owned by political leaders and thus, reflect their opinion. Others are owned by political leaders bribed by the belligerents, trying to win Romania's sympathies¹⁵. The most well sold newspaper in the country, *Universul*, published articles for the general public, who debates so loudly in the streets about the barbaric Germans and the dreadful Russians in the very specific “an expert for every problem” that tends to characterize the Romanian civil society.

But people don't get to read only brief newspaper articles. 1915 is the year witnessing a large increase in publications of all kinds. Hundreds of leaflets and brochures see the light of day under the name of ‘famous unknowns’ as they are named by the Romanian irony. An avalanche of writers, most of them affiliated to one of the main courses of action, some of them (former) politicians, but not experienced in the diplomacy of foreign policy, some of them doctors, lawyers, etc – all seems to have an opinion about Romania's best option given the situation, and each and every one of them wants to make this opinion known to the general public. Since the belligerents invest a lot of money in both friendly newspapers and publishing houses, we assist to a proliferation of brochures and leaflets publication. All of the usual ones contain an argumentation in favour of the ‘other side’. There are some presenting mainly political reasons for which Romania should choose a specific side, analyzing the national interest as the supreme goal and putting up scenarios to obtain its most desired territories in case the ally of the enemy wins. We shall stop for a brief analysis of two of these brochures that were published in 1915, one for each side.

15. I.G.Duca, *Amintiri politice*, (Munchen: Jon Dumitru Verlag, 1981, vol.I), 51.

16. Andrei Corteanu, *Războiul european și Interesele Noastre. Psihologia politiceii neutrale române*, (București: Editura Autorului, 1915), 31.

“Războiul european și Interesele Noastre. Psihologia politiceii neutrale române” is written by Andrei Corteanu and published under the aegis of “Convorbiri literare”, conducted by Titu Maiorescu, a well-known supporter of Germany, and “Viața Românească”, whose leader is the well-known Bessarabian Russophobe Constantin Stere. One can easily image the ideas presented by such a publication. The war is considered to be a serious problem, posing Romania in front of a bias: conserving its integrity with the economic and political freedoms existing, but fulfilling its dream of reuniting all the Romanians within its borders. The author tries to explain the causes of the war by “a clash of titans”, with a noticeable adversity towards Great Britain¹⁶ and the Russian Empire, and with vivid French and German sympathies. Austria Hungary appears as a balancer in the Balkan region, while it controls the Central Europe. Should Austria fall, then Russia will extend its influence up to the Adriatic Sea, supported by pan Slavism and thus dismantling the balance in the Balkans and crushing the independence of the little states in the Danubian region, such as Romania. The author launches himself in an analysis of the internal situation in Romania, criticizing the lack of determination in reaching a decision, the confusion caused by the flattering French and English newspapers that have abandoned the condescending tone they used regarding Romania during the Balkan wars, are now making unreliable promises. Corteanu sees two possible endings¹⁷. The Russian victory is the worst case scenario, because this means losing our army fighting the Bulgarians, and therefore, Dobroudja, thus becoming too small to count and forced to forsake our Latin heritage for survival. If we stay neutral, and Russians win, or if we fight alongside the Entente, this is the end for Romania.¹⁸ The author believes that the second hypothesis is more likely to bring important benefits. In this case, Romania should support Austria, because: we would gain Bessarabia, and we would join the Austrian Empire, where all the Romanians will be more numerous and thus more important than the Hungarians. This is the best option Romania has, and that is why we should help Austria win by joining the Central Powers¹⁹.

On the other hand, the problem of who will gain the future hegemony of the Continent and how this presumptive winner will treat Romania is also a major preoccupation. However, while the Central Powers supportive publications state that the war was started by the desire of England and Russia to divide the world between them by annihilation of the German Empire, the Entente party blames it all on the barbaric, boastful and greedy Germany and its uncontrollable Kaiser. George Diamandy’s “Cauzele Războiului și interesele României” tries to explain the Entente supporters’ perspective on the matter. One cannot help from noticing the similarities in the titles of the two brochures we have chosen as exam-

17. A. Corteanu, *Războiul european*, 38.

18. A. Corteanu, *Războiul european*, 72

19. A. Corteanu, *Războiul european*, 1915, 76.

ples. It is all about the “blame”, “who hath caused this” and “national interest”. Each side presents its arguments concisely, insisting on the important points, such as territorial gains, political and economic aspects. The Entente supporters seem to be convinced that in the case of a victory of the Central Powers, Romania’s internal economic market will collapse under the monopoly of German capital²⁰. As a consequence, even if there was no national ideal involved in choosing the alliance to join, Romania should keep in mind that economic aspects are just as important as the political ones, because under German economic sovereignty, the political freedoms will have no value. Furthermore, Russia has no such economic means to threaten us. “It is not superiority that frightens us, but hegemonic aspirations fulfilled”²¹. Should Germany control the Straits, it would be far worse than Russia, because the Central Powers “are homogeneous, a single state, a single German race”²², while the Entente is “represented by Great Powers of different nations and interest, which will prefer making the Straits international”²³. Diamandy considers that Romania should not make the same mistake again by negotiating only with one Great Power. He believed that “size matters” in order to make one’s voice heard and taken into account, therefore Romania should proceed in joining the side granting it the best benefits in terms of surface, population (and economic means such as factories and urban infrastructure, even though not explicitly mentioned): Transylvania. Only afterwards, as a bigger state in the region, Romania can hope to raise the voice claiming for Bessarabia.

However, these are not the only brochures pleading for one cause or the other. They are in a way, more rational, even if, after a 100 years’ time, some may make the reader smile with irony. There is a distinct category appealing to the most moving part of the war: the impact on the lives of civilians in belligerent countries that are living too close to the front lines. While Romania knew the misery of war, the involvement of modern technologies brings the First World War to a different scale of implication, both in the trenches and on the home front. Weapons are not just used for killing, but for killing more people, with more cruelty and more efficiently. An important part is all about the image of the enemy - atrocities conducted by both Russian soldiers in Bucovina and Austrian and Hungarian ones in Serbia. Pillage, rape, torture of prisoners, new and very damaging weapons, all is presented to the readers, with pictures included, in order to make more clear that ‘that side’ in particular is the most immoral and cruel and that Romania should definitely not associate itself with such barbarians. These brochures present such scenes of horrible wounds caused by modern bullets, such as the *Dum Dum*, by

20. George Diamandy, *Cauzele Războiului și interesele României* (București: Imprimeria Independența, 1915), 58.

21. G. Diamandy, *Cauzele Războiului*, 59.

22. G. Diamandy, *Cauzele Războiului*, 58.

23. G. Diamandy, *Cauzele Războiului*, 59.

modern German bayonets - one cannot help from noticing that from all the belligerent countries weaponry, only German bayonets have saw-like appearance, thus inflicting more pain and bigger wounds on their victims. Certainly, readers which have not yet decided which side to take have to be informed of the behaviour of the armies entangled in the conflict. This is quite a double standard since the main reason is to criticize barbaric behaviours, by saying that it is immoral to fight alongside soldiers that pillage, rape and kill innocent civilians and massacre prisoners, but at the same time an unuttered fear raises: "What happens if this army is the number one enemy and they do the same atrocities on our country?"

We shall stop upon two examples as well. The first one, "Din barbariile rusești. Pe aici au trecut rușii. Grozăviile armatei țarului în Bucovina. Cu ilustrațiuni. Notele unui gazetar drumeț." by C.I. Dicescu, presents the Cossack atrocities in the villages on the Austrian - Romanian border. Attacking at first Jewish people, the Cossacks continue with pillaging and most of all raping all the women they encounter. Explicit details are given by eyewitnesses to this barbaric attacks²⁴. However, the illustrations present only ruins of villages and Austrian manors and no human victims²⁵.

On the other hand, there are publications about the Austrian troops' behaviour in Serbia, such as "Austro Ungarii și felul cum au făcut războiul în Serbia. Note luate la fața locului de un neutru" by a Swiss professor at the Lausanne University, R.A. Reiss. Considered an objective source, even if published in Paris, the brochure presents different kinds of atrocities. First of all, modern weapons, as previously mentioned, the explosive bullets and new kinds of artillery shells are presented in detail, as well as their effects on the wounded²⁶. Explicit images present also horrible images of prisoners massacred and left to rot, of women and children mutilated and killed²⁷.

What started initially as a mockery of the Germans by French post cards, which presented a German soldier victoriously placing his boot on the body of a woman, the whole scene being labelled as "Their only victory - the innocent and weak"²⁸ - proved to be an efficient propaganda weapon for a population that feared war instinctively and did not share the Western enthusiasm for going to war through the entire population.

And yet, in France and Germany, mockery and humour play their important part. French and German post cards present comic images of the enemy, but they

24. C.I. Dicescu, *Din barbariile rusești. Pe aici au trecut rușii. Grozăviile armatei țarului în Bucovina. Cu ilustrațiuni. Notele unui gazetar drumeț*, f.l., f.e., 1915, 21-26.

25. C.I. Dicescu, *Din barbariile rusești*, 34-42.

26. R.A. Reiss, *Austro Ungarii și felul cum au făcut războiul în Serbia. Note luate la fața locului de un neutru*, Paris, Librairie Armand Colin, 1915, 4-10.

27. *Ibidem.*, 14-33.

28. *La grande guerre*, 21.

never criticize home front decisions. Even pleas for peace are censored as they are considered an expression of defeatism starting to emerge in 1915. Not yet at war, Romania has the same satirical images published in the press. *Furnica* magazine presents to the public most of the caricatures, with themes ranging from ridiculous, vulgar to terrifying, but insisting on the ridiculous and criticizing the entire situation in Bucharest in those days. Unlike French postcards used for propaganda purposes to determine people to support the war effort, the Romanian caricatures are ironically emphasizing the incapacity of the political elites to reach consensus. Sometimes crude, sometimes elaborate, the humour of *Furnica* consists of presenting each ruler of the belligerents with his most prominent traits: Kaiser Wilhelm with his moustache and his Prussian Helmet²⁹, Franz Josef with his mutton chops as a mere puppet in the hands of a Character with Hun whiskers³⁰. One can unmistakably distinguish Ferdinand of Romania and Ionel Bratianu, as well as other ministers, but also characters embodying several national stereotypes. All of these can quickly send the message to a public that seems to know a bit of everything and is easily confused and reluctant to form a firm opinion.

Although it often presents caricatures of the Central Powers, we could say that *Furnica* is entirely and overtly pro Entente. Most often it mocks the situation of neutrality itself, Ferdinand's reluctance to make a decision, concealing from Ionel Bratianu the foreign legations activity, the attitude of the two warring camps against Romania, the situation on the front, etc.

Ten months after the outburst of the war, the victory is far from near for both sides. Kaiser Wilhelm is presented near God, who warns him that his Weltpolitik plans are doomed since he trusted such an old mule - Franz Josef³¹, whose empire is now a mockery for all the Romanian inhabited provinces inside it. The Great Russian Retreat³² and the first use of toxic gases on the front are also satirized by *Furnica*, which portrays the Tzar running, and the gases as being produced in German latrines³³. Ionel Bratianu is presented as being courted by all the Great Powers in Europe and proudly deciding to do exactly the opposite of what it is expected of him, i.e. nothing special³⁴. King Ferdinand is either hiding to avoid

29. *Furnica*, accessed January 28, 2016 <http://www.marelerazboi.ro/razboi-catalog-obiecte/item/pagina-din-revista-furnica-nr-din-14-iulie-1915>.

30. *Furnica*, accessed January 28, 2016 <http://www.marelerazboi.ro/razboi-catalog-obiecte/item/caricatura-de-razboi-in-furnica>.

31. *Furnica*, accessed January 28, 2016 <http://www.marelerazboi.ro/razboi-catalog-obiecte/item/pagina-din-revista-furnica-nr-din-10-februarie-1915>.

32. *Furnica*, accessed January 28, 2016 <http://www.marelerazboi.ro/razboi-catalog-obiecte/item/pagina-din-revista-furnica-nr-din-28-iulie-1916>.

33. *Furnica*, accessed January 28, 2016 <http://www.marelerazboi.ro/razboi-catalog-obiecte/item/pagina-din-revista-furnica-nr-din-4-august-1915>.

34. *Furnica*, accessed January 28, 2016 <http://www.marelerazboi.ro/razboi-catalog-obiecte/item/pagina-din-revista-furnica-nr-din-23-iunie-1915>.

decision, or struggling to build greater Romania on his own, while the belligerents keep on making him useless promises³⁵.

These comics are important in our analysis because they manage to summarize a situation and to ironically explain it to the commoners, without indoctrinating them as the newspaper texts written by skilled journalists, which may confuse the citizens baffled among so many opinions expressed. Caricature is much closer to a broader audience, the messages are short and comply with the proverbial attitude “to make the best of a bad bargain”.

Royal Hopes

THE VOICES raise in two important directions: for going to war and for staying neutral. The warmongers are divided between the Entente and the Central Powers supporters.

The Entente cause gathered the larger community, grouping most of the elites of the country, as well as a great part of the political parties' leaders, such as Ionel Bratianu, the Prime Minister, who cannot show his affliction given the negotiations he has with the belligerents. Take Ionescu, Nicolae Filipescu and a few others are also strong Entente supporters. Their reasons are largely based on sympathies for the culture and civilization these countries represent: England and France, most of all, while Russia brings the large army support. Their main argument was that Transylvania should be recovered and integrated back to Romania, after centuries of religious and political persecutions from the Hungarians to the Romanian majority, forced to live as a minority in the own land³⁶.

On the other hand, there are the Central Powers supporters³⁷. Their motivation in proclaiming that Romania should join Germany, Austria Hungary and the rest of their allies varies for each leader of this smaller and therefore less homogeneous group. Some, as Petre P. Carp argue that it is a question of morality to respect Carol I's legacy and continue with the alliance signed in 1883. Others, such as the Bessarabian Constantin Stere, fear Russia so much that they claim it is the greatest menace for Romania and, therefore, it is only logical to go against it, adding that Romanians living in Bessarabia are experiencing far more worse conditions than those in Transylvania, who have access to schools and churches in their own

35. Furnica, accessed January 28, 2016 <http://www.marelerazboi.ro/razboi-catalog-obiecte/item/pagina-din-revista-furnica-nr-din-28-iulie-1915>.

36. Constantin Nuțu, *România în anii neutralității, 1914-1916*, București: Editura Științifică, 1972, 56.

37. Lucian Boia, *Germanofili – elita intelectuală românească în anii Primului Război Mondial* (București: Humanitas, 2014), passim.

language, as well as political representatives in the Parliament of the Dual Monarchy, while Bessarabia is struggling under Russia's merciless whip³⁸.

A few socialist voices support the neutrality, claiming that Romania is not at all prepared to join the war on either side, because it lacks the means to support such an effort. Most of them are socialists, pleading for peace, since they believe internal problems are more severe than becoming a regional actor with extended powers. However, such voices are weak.

Nonetheless, the Entente party has the most important supporter of them all: Her Majesty the Queen, Marie of Edinburgh. Of British and Russian ancestry, she openly supports their cause. She will definitely play an important role - heiress of an impressive ancestry, with extended ramification in all European Royal Families, she can bring the alliance negotiations to a different, higher level. The Tsar, the Kaiser and the British King are her cousins. The letters Missy - Nicky and Missy - George cannot take all the credit for the important concessions demanded from the Entente powers by Ionel Brătianu. However, "dearest Missy", even as the Queen of an emerging young state, cannot be held responsible for using her influence to support all the diplomatic demeanours of Bucharest³⁹. Through letters addressed to her relatives, such as the Great Duchess Vladimir, her aunt, Queen Marie gives the posterity some details about the financial aspects of the Entente propaganda in Romania, thus enabling us to consider the important role she played on Ferdinand's side⁴⁰. Foreign ambassadors and *chargés d'affaires* in Bucharest visit her in order to persuade her to plead for their party. It is therefore well acknowledged that she has influence, even if it is a premiere on the Romanian political stage.⁴¹

The Royal couple was definitely yearning to see Romania become Greater by regaining Transylvania. Both Ferdinand, suffering from being banished from the Hohenzollern Family⁴², and Marie, who initially felt a stranger in this unknown Eastern Country, see this as an opportunity to surpass their condition of King and Queen of a small kingdom at the gates of the Levant⁴³.

On the other hand, Ionel Brătianu will play his role more confident, once he is certain he can count on the Queen's support. Once the wheels of family bonds are set in motion, he knows these will open many more doors than he would have succeeded by himself. He can now hope to talk as equals with his potential allies⁴⁴.

38. *Regele Ferdinand*, 82.

39. Dumitru Suciu – *Monarhia și făurirea României Mari* (București: Albatros, 1997), 180.

40. Maria, Regina României, *Povestea vieții mele*, (volumul III) (Bucharest: Rao International Publishing Company, 2011), 37. (hereinafter *Povestea III*)

41. *Povestea III*, 14-17.

42. Martha Bibescu – *Ferdinand I al României*, (București: Editura Cultura Națională, 1930), 26.

43. Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria românilor în timpul celor patru regi (1866-1947)*, ediția a II-a, vol. II, *Ferdinand I*, (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), 12.

44. Glenn E. Torrey – *Romania and World War I – A Collection Of Studies*, (Iași, Oxford, Portland: The Center for Romanian Studies, 1998), 24.

However, even if the front events seem to concur for supporting his enormous demands, entering the war in 1916 comes in a bad timing for the Entente troops. The Russian Revolution destroys all his plans, but to foresee such an unfortunate linkage of events seems most unlikely for anyone. Nevertheless, Romania's star will prevail all hardships, making the King and the Queen the "uncrowned emperor and empress of all Romanians" - their greatest hope fulfilled⁴⁵.

Popular expectations

WHAT ABOUT the Romanians? What did the people think and feel about the war? This study leaves us little space to talk about the expectations and fears of the people in front of the war, in general. In 1915 Romania, the population seems divided yet between going to war and remaining neutral. The warmongers control only the urban public opinion and generally the elites.

The population of the suburban area and the large population of peasants are almost totally unaware of the political debate surrounding the choice of an alliance that would grant Romania the fulfilment of the national goal: uniting all the territories inhabited by Romanians under the same flag. They are poorly educated, they lack information⁴⁶. The image of war in their eyes is formed up from tales of the elderly that participated in the 1877 campaign against the Turks, and the few images that the newspapers provide them. One could easily imagine that they never shouted "Hail Austria!" or "Vive la France!"; and even if you may suspect that they feel a certain common identity to the Orthodox Russians, they unknowingly fear it, since the collective memories of the Russo-Turkish wars are not yet forgotten.

As most of them are illiterate, they rely on the teacher and the priest to present them with arguments and help them understand and accept the necessity of joining the cause of the just war they were about to enter and the benefits they would gain afterwards. Even these two very important characters are quite confused by the turn of events. On the one hand, they previously made speeches about the German nation, which gave Romania a dynasty and helped it economically. On the other hand, they cannot forsake the speeches they made about the eternal friend and ally, France, the older Latin sister. But the Germans are allied with the hated Austrians, who rule over Bucovina, and the even more despised Hungarians, who rule over Transylvania. The French are in the same boat with the Russians, who left so many unpleasant memories⁴⁷.

45. Guy Gauthier, *Missy, Regina României* (București: Humanitas, 2004), 155-161.

46. *Istorie și mit*, 55.

47. Ion Slavici, *Vox Populi – maiu 1915 – răspunsuri primite din sate la concursul publicat de Ziua*, (București, 1915), 22-26.

As a conclusion, the great majority of the population is not influenced by the press, and still hesitates between one side or the other. However, they all agree that they should not refuse going to war - first of all, because their mentality prevents them from believing that the government and above all the king is incapable of making a bad decision⁴⁸. The memory of 1907 is fresh, and obeying orders is in their nature⁴⁹. However, we do not get to have a clear image about the peasant expectations of the war. Their sense of kinship regarding the Romanians in the other neighbouring provinces is recorded as being present, but they seem to be more preoccupied with their future crops and daily problems, such as the lack of land to farm in order to feed their quite large families, lack of cattle, poor health condition. Their only hope is that, as the war is over, perhaps the government will have the means to reconsider helping them and improving their condition.

Were the Romanians aware of the economic potential of Transylvania, which would bring them an industry, a largely educated population and natural resources not easy to neglect? Is that why they preferred it instead of the dusty Bessarabia, with its Russified rural and illiterate population? The current debate between modern historians seems to forget that Romania's approach towards the 1920-1940's Bessarabia was not friendly at all. Some may go as far as to consider that even if Romania had not entered the war, the course of events would have given it the same territories, since all the Empires collapsed and their nationalities were free to decide their own faith.⁵⁰ Counterfactual history is never the answer. What we know for certain is that, irrespective of the debates, the royal hopes and the public expectations, Romania went *per aspera ad astra* to becoming the Greater Romania and enjoying all the benefits this position would bring, even if for a brief period of time.

48. I. Slavici, *Vox Populi* – maiu 1915, 29.

49. I. Slavici, *Vox Populi* – maiu 1915, 28.

50. Lucian Boia, *Primul Razboi Mondial: controverse, paradoxuri, reinterpretari* (București: Humanitas, 2014), passim.

RUMOURS, FEAR, ANXIETY, WAR?

Social Mood and Situation at the Beginning of the First World War in Smaller Towns in West Galicia



KAMIL RUSZAŁA

Abstract

Galicia, a crown land located on the outskirts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, bordering with Russia, was a place of warfare during the First World War. At the beginning of war the situation of the inhabitants of the Galician towns were totally disparate. One can enumerate a lot of decrees from the Galician Government which were dealing with the wide spreading gossips, which made a lot of chaos, disturbance and a lot of noise in everyday life in Galicia. This part of our paper could deliver information about this less-known social reaction - contrary to war enthusiasm, which is totally dominated in literature - as a fear, intimidation from the authority, making a state of war. On the other hand, the paper answers a question - what do the inhabitants of the smaller towns know about the war? Were they well-prepared, whether they would take part in it or avoid it?

Keywords

World War I, Galicia, Austro-Hungary, civil-military relation, refugee, public-security

ON 28 June 1914, after the assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne and his wife in Sarajevo, Europe was in an uproar. People of all faiths all over Galicia prayed for the souls of the Archduke and Archduchess. Large Western European cities showed enthusiasm for war¹. The heated atmosphere infected bigger cities in Galicia as well. Mourning flags were displayed on government buildings, in Cracow theatre performances were cancelled, a lot of articles appeared in the press, expressing sympathy². The people of Galicia at that time were also busy following information published in newspapers about the events in Biała related to Polish-German antagonisms on the Silesian-Galician borderland³. As a result, the public opinion was rather detached from the events in Sarajevo and put aside the thought of a possible outbreak of a war. Still, the atmosphere of social unrest was created by the Galician state authorities themselves.

The governorship would inform district authorities about the current situation by frequent circular letters. On 21 July it ordered to pay close attention to who was buying horses, as the Serbian and Romanian governments were planning to buy them in large numbers⁴. The next day each district authority office received a warning about the possibility of further attacks which might be aimed not only at the members of the ruling family but also at military objects, equipment, communication routes, etc.⁵ That resulted in closer control of people, particularly foreigners staying in Galicia at that time, and of organizations whose activity might lead to violating order and security. On 24 July the authorities in Lviv⁶ forbade the *starostas* (county district heads) to go on leaves, and all those who were on holidays or leaves at the time were forced to return to work immediately. Soon a state of emergency was announced for reasons of public safe-

1. Cf. M.S. Neiberg, *Dance of the Furies. Europe and the Outbreak of World War I*, (Harvard University Press 2011).
2. P. Szlanta, *Wiara w znajome dziś, wiara w niepewne jutro. Polacy wobec wybuchu Wielkiej Wojny* [in:] *Wielka Wojna poza linią frontu*, Ed. D. Grinberg, J. Snopko, G. Zackiewicz, (Białystok, 2013), 16–17. There also more extensive bibliography concerning pro-war moods. For more on the reaction of Galician society see: J. Z. Pająk, *Od autonomii do niepodległości. Kształtowanie się postaw politycznych i narodowych społeczeństwa Galicji w warunkach Wielkiej Wojny 1914–1918*, 55 and further.
3. See e.g. S. Kukuczka, *Pogranicze w ogniu. Konflikt polsko-niemiecki w Bielsku-Białej i jego przebieg w cieniu zamachu w Sarajewie* [in:] *Front wschodni I wojny światowej. Studia z dziejów militarnych i polityczno-społecznych*, Ed. M. Baczkowski, K. Ruszała (Kraków, 2013), 97–104.
4. Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie (The National Archive in Kraków, for next quotation see: ANK), Starostwo Powiatowe w Oświęcimiu (Oświęcom County, for next quotation see: StO), signature 2, 401.
5. ANK, StO 2, 405.
6. About Galician capital cities during the First World War see: Мазур О., Патер І., *Перша Світова війна*, [in:] *Історія Львова: у трьох томах. Том 2: 1772 — жовтень 1918*, Львів 2007; H. Kramarz, *Samorząd Lwowa w czasie pierwszej wojny światowej i jego rola w życiu miasta*, Kraków 1994; Ch. Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen in einer multiethnischen Stadt. Lemberg 1914–1947*, Wiesbaden 2010.

ty⁷. On 27 July 1914 the authorities in Lviv issued another circular letter concerning the tightening of border control. It said, among others, that intensive activity of spies and Russian emissaries had been noticed. It was therefore ordered to pay special attention to observing registration regulations, to tighten control of strangers and to seal the borders. Detailed guidelines recommended restriction of traveller traffic, thorough control of documents, sending back any unwelcome persons, and if necessary, arrest⁸. The authorities appealed for restricting foreigner traffic inside the country and stopping migratory labour; they also ordered introducing strict control of hotels and inns and a possible expulsion from the country of suspiciously behaving individuals. On 27 July 1914 Kriegsüberwachungsamt (War Control Office) was appointed, as a special institution at the Ministry of War in Vienna, to deal with control and censorship⁹. That office established a special code for communication between national and local administration authorities, which went into general use, e.g. in telegrams¹⁰. On that same day some railway lines in Galicia started to be additionally protected by military guards¹¹. It was also ordered to use firearms if a train did not stop on the army's demand. In early August particular attention was paid to rail bridges in Galicia which were put under special protection¹². The authorities also watched closely the Greek Catholic bishop from Canada, Rev. Soter Ortyński, who in late summer of 1914, having come to Karlsbad, visited also Galicia and Hungary¹³. The district authorities were told to watch the clergyman's doings. That was connected with the fact that he was highly placed in the Greek Catholic circles, and he could encourage people to emigrate to Canada.

On 28 July the war broke out, setting in motion the whole machine: on 1 August the German government declared war on Russia and France started general mobilization; on 2 August Belgium rejected the German ultimatum; on 3 August Germany declared war on France. Its army, heading towards France, encroached on the territory of Belgium, to which Great Britain reacted by joining the war. On 5 August Austria-Hungary declared war on Montenegro and Russia; the latter was at war with Germany since 8 August. Right after the outbreak of the war, on 30 July 1914, in the whole of Galicia intelligence services against Russia were strengthened. One day later the authorities ordered that any persons suspected of espionage and conspiracy or otherwise dangerous for the state or for military mobi-

7. ANK, StO 2, 407.

8. ANK, StO 2, 431 and further.

9. ANK, StO 2, 505-506. See more: T. Scheer, *Die Ringstraßenfront. Österreich-Ungarn, das Kriegsüberwachungsamt und der Ausnahmezustand während des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Wien, 2010).

10. See a copy of encrypted-telegram: ANK, StO 2, 483.

11. ANK, StO 2, 427.

12. ANK, StO 2, 565 and further.

13. ANK, StO 2, 445.

lization were to be arrested without hesitation and without regard for any personal reasons. In connection with the dissolution of the National Sejm in Lviv and closing the session of Parliament in Vienna, parliamentary privilege was no longer in force¹⁴.

People were very easily influenced by rumours¹⁵. False information circulated about the unreliability of savings banks, which resulted in mass withdrawing of savings. Some people took advantage of the situation and cheated the scared and gullible population through buying out securities below their real value¹⁶. Innkeepers were warned that if they encouraged civilians or the military to drink excessively or did not accept paper money at its real value, their concession would be withdrawn¹⁷. The authorities had issued an instruction to pay attention to airplanes: it was indicated that the ones with red and white tails and a red and white flag belonged to Austria, those with black crosses on wings and tails belonged to the allied Germany, whereas all other aircraft was to be shot at, from whatever arms one had¹⁸. It was stressed that a very important aspect in that initial period of turmoil and mobilization was efficient functioning of town authorities. The officials suspected of supporting the enemy were to be suspended from their duties, and should it be found out that a whole town authority was infected with enemy propaganda, it was to be dissolved forthwith, which was regulated by an appropriate law¹⁹.

The civilians hardly knew what the future would be like. Did the people from Galicia realize their territory would be the area of hostilities? Were they able to predict that it would not be a short-term conflict, like it had been said at first, but it would linger for years? For sure, this was not what was believed by those who went to fight for independent Poland²⁰. Part of society remained passive towards what was happening beyond the borders of their country; the people were interested only in their own closest environment. Others did not accept any thought

14. ANK, StO 2, 479.

15. About rumours during the First World War see: F. Altenhöner, *Kommunikation und Kontrolle. Gerüchte und städtische Öffentlichkeiten in Berlin und London 1914-1918* (München, 2008); T. Krzemiński, *Pogłoska jako przejaw komunikacji społecznej w okresie pierwszej wojny światowej (przykład Prus Zachodnich)*, [in:] *Front wschodni I wojny światowej...*, s. 137–152; D. Szymczak, *Plotka i plotkowanie na ziemiach polskich w czasie I wojny światowej*, [in:] *Komunikowanie i komunikacja na ziemiach polskich w latach 1795–1918*, red. K. Stępnik, M. Rajewski, Lublin 2008., s. 217–226; O. Vynnyk, *Rumours during the Russian occupation of Lviv (1914–1915)*, The Online Publications Series of the Center for Urban History of East Central Europe, nr 1, <http://www.lvivcenter.org/en/publications/ece-urban/> (access: 30 June 2015).

16. ANK, StO 2, 491.

17. ANK, StO 2, 504–505.

18. ANK, StO 2, 605.

19. ANK, StO 2, 633 and further.

20. M. Bobrzyński, *Wskrzeszenie państwa polskiego. Szkic historyczny*, vol. 1: 1914–1918 (Kraków, 1920), 21.

of a possible war; they could not imagine something they had never experienced – previous wars fought by Austria and later Austria-Hungary remained but legends handed down from generation to generation. Some people perceived war in mythological terms. An owner of a tailor's shop in Gorlice²¹, a small town in West Galicia, which would later become famous for a military operation in May 1915, recorded:

When general mobilization was announced, I was actually quite happy. First of all, while reading history, I had always envied those who lived during the times of great conflicts, e. g. Greek, Roman or Napoleonic wars. I envied them for their knowledge and experience. That is why I enjoyed reading historical books and I was excited, expecting a better future after the war, as I believed that a war had to bring along thorough changes in the life of every person²².

Further the author of the memoir quotes a general opinion that the war would end in no time and the enemy would be defeated very quickly. For sure, what influenced this perception was the war propaganda believed by masses of people. As the memoirist noticed, the enthusiasm did not last for long: frequent transports with the wounded and prisoners of war, rumours about the power of the Russian army – all that made people “start to doubt whether the war would be of benefit to anyone”. Similar feelings were expressed by an intellectual, director of secondary school, also from Gorlice, who wrote that the war had been widely discussed, however people were convinced that it was not going to reach their town, situated at the foot of mountains. The director claimed there was no one in the whole town who thought their surroundings would become the area of hostilities. In consequence, it was decided to start the school year of 1914 in autumn at the usual time²³. Likewise, a priest from Biecz, a small town situated near Gorlice, wrote from the perspective of over two years about the experience of war, asking many questions about what war actually looked like. He said he had never

21. About Gorlice Town during the First World War see more: K. Ruszała, *Wielka Wojna w małym mieście. Gorlice w latach 1914-1918*, Kraków 2015. The town saw the Russian invasion twice. Until the beginning of November 1914 Austrian soldiers had stationed here. After they had left the town, on 15 November there appeared the first Russian soldiers. Gorlice remained in their hands until 12 December 1914. Then the Third Army led by General Boroewić drove back the Russian troops and the Austrians regained the town for over two weeks. Soon, however, the Third and Eighth Russian armies repelled the Austrian troops and from 27 December until May the next year Gorlice was under Russian occupation. It found itself on the front line, which for the local people and the authorities meant living practically on the battlefield.
22. Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich we Wrocławiu (National Ossoliński Institute in Wrocław), Manuscripts Library, sign. 7813 I: S. Kosiba, *Wspomnienia wypadków wojennych...*, k. 1–2. (Memories of the war events).
23. *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcyi c.k. Gimnazjum w Gorlicach za lata szkolne 1915–1916* (Gorlice, 1916), 5. (Report of the director of the secondary school in Gorlice for 1915-1916).

expected that the real war would reach his neighbourhood and that he would experience it himself²⁴. There are countless examples of such memories and descriptions of ignorance and surprise by actual events.

Even the sounds had changed. The provincial peace and quiet, the reassuring sounds of horse hoofs, carts, busy markets, had been drowned out by the so-far unknown sounds of war. People gradually started to hear the war and they also were curious to see it. One of the diarists, a teacher, wrote that the moment they heard strange sounds of shots or explosions of grenades, a few people led by their parish priest went up the nearby hill to “see the war from close up”. That provoked reflection and questions, what was going to happen to them²⁵.

The sense of security was vanishing. Up to that moment, the people from Galicia had been able to read about remote wars in historical books, like the mentioned memoirist from Gorlice. The conflicts preceding the Great War, like the Russo-Japanese War or the Balkan wars, could be followed in the newspapers, but the residents of Galicia were not too interested in world affairs, as life in the Galician provinces followed its own rhythm. Presumably, even after the assassination in Sarajevo they did not realize that tragic events were imminent. “Unfortunately, none of us had any idea of what war looked like!” – wrote Władysław Kijowski, a policeman inspector from Gorlice in his memories after the first war experiences in autumn 1914²⁶.

On 31 July, a few days after the war had been declared, the people from Galicia saw posters calling them to arms. All those eligible after getting acquainted with the directive were to report to the competent army recruiting command in 24 hours. During the First World War the military duty introduced in 1868 after the reform in the Austro-Hungarian army was carried out on the grounds of the law of 5 July 1912²⁷.

1 September was the date the school year normally started. Here is one more example from Gorlice: Despite general conviction that the war was not going to reach their town, some residents felt so anxious that instead of enrolling their chil-

24. A. Czubek, *Kronika parafialna Kościoła Bieckiego*, (The chronicle of the parish church in Biecz) [in:] <http://bitwa.lobiecz.pl/czubekwspom.pdf> (accessed on: 31-07-2014). The notes are dated to 1916.

25. K. Szatko, *Staszkówka w pierwszych latach dwudziestego wieku* (Staszkówka at the beginning of XX century, manuscript gathered in Regional Museum in Gorlice), p. 21. Staszkówka is small village located near Gorlice.

26. W. Kijowski, *Pamiętnik inspektora policji w Gorlicach (1914-1915)*, Ed. W. Pawłowski, Gorlice 2006, p. 12. (Diary of a police inspector).

27. *Dziennik Ustaw Państwa 1912*, Nr 128: *Ustawa dotycząca wprowadzenia nowej ustawy o służbie wojskowej* (National Journal of Law 1912, the law on military service); S. Szuro, *Reforma wojskowa przeprowadzona w państwie austro-węgierskim w 1868 r. i jej realizacja ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Galicji*, „Studia i materiały do historii wojskowości” 1990, vol. XXXIII; M. Baczkowski, *Pod czarno-żółtymi sztandarami. Galicja i jej mieszkańcy wobec austro-węgierskich struktur militarnych 1868–1914*, Kraków 2003, 11 and further.

dren in schools, they would come to the director's office and present their fears, suggesting putting off the start of the school until the war ended. The parents' fears must have been affected by the general mobilization and social turmoil. When they said "the end of the war" they meant the conflict would end by October 1914. Interestingly, the opinion about a prompt return to normal life was shared by more and more educated people. At the same time as many as half of the teaching staff had to leave school buildings to go to battlefields. It was possible that also older students would be mobilized, which could result in general closure of schools. Eventually studying was organized in several school forms. The decision of the secondary school director to continue education and the attempts for the school to function normally were supposed to raise the spirits of the local people, who were more and more concerned by the war²⁸.

The fears were enhanced when the troops marched through the town. Even at the end of August, Gorlice saw the Austrian army marching towards East Galicia. "They were riding with gusto, accompanied by the sounds of an orchestra playing the Radetzky March with a swagger, an apotheosis of the old general's bravery" – wrote another diarist from that town²⁹. The marches required regulating the traffic in Galicia. The authorities ordered not to block communication routes and to observe the left-hand side traffic and the no-parking and no-stopping signs in narrow roads³⁰. Both the passing and the stationed Austro-Hungarian soldiers would often destroy, rob and soil the town, e. g. by digging in some peripheral districts large sewage pits, which gave off terrible stench³¹. Also, the residents themselves did not always keep their homesteads and surroundings clean. Caring for hygiene in the town was crucial: the situation favoured the spread of infectious diseases which the people from Gorlice soon had to face. Dysentery and cholera spread from the soldiers to the civilians.

The need to supply food for both the civilians and the army brought about scarcity of provisions; even getting a piece of bread was a problem. The town inhabitants were scared. In Gorlice the atmosphere was "warmed up" by the information that the *starosta* and the head of the court of justice were planning to leave the town. It should be mentioned that already on 6 August the town hall offi-

28. *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji c.k. Gimnazjum w Gorlicach za lata szkolne 1915–1916*, 6. (Report of the director of the secondary school in Gorlice for 1915–1916). About school during the war see e.g. S. Audoin-Rouzeau, *Kinder und Jugendliche*, [in:] *Enzyklopädie Erster Weltkrieg*, Hrsg. G. Hirschfeld (Paderborn-München-Wien-Zürich, 2009), 135–141; *Kindheit und Schule im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Hrsg. H. Stekl, Ch. Hämmerle, E. Bruckmüller (Wien, 2015).

29. J. Benisz, *Miasto przed inwazją* (The town before the invasion, manuscript gathered in Regional Museum in Gorlice), 1.

30. ANK, StO 2, 707.

31. Archiwum Państwowe w Rzeszowie, oddział w Sanoku (State Archive in Rzeszow, Branch in Sanok, for further quotation see: APRz-S), Akta miasta Gorlic (Gorlice Town File, for further quotation see: AMG), sign. 926, 159.

cials received a letter from the mayor obliging them to closely observe office hours and to be available at all times; even their night duties were planned. Administration staff was ordered under pain of disciplinary punishment not to leave the town without special permission, except when being mobilized³². On 23 September 1914 the town council passed a resolution for all town hall employees to stay in town under threat of losing their jobs. Soon the situation changed diametrically: in a few days the mayor and plenty of town officials left Gorlice. What appears especially puzzling is the attitude of the mayor, taking into consideration the directive he had issued himself. Soon some offices were evacuated, like county's Courthouse. Control over the abandoned town was taken by a priest (Rev. Bronisław Świeykowski)³³, who did not have enough competent staff though, as some of the officials had fled and some had been called up to the army.

Fears were enhanced due to mob law and accusations of espionage. In Gorlice in early October a soldier from the 10th infantry regiment from Przemyśl was hanged, after 200 rubbles was found on him³⁴. This was not an isolated case. A piece of paper was attached to his dead body with the word "spy" written in several languages to spread fear among the inhabitants³⁵. This signalled the future hell of accusations of espionage, which the population was to experience later during the ordeal of war; the obsession with spies after the liberation of Galicia from Russian occupation, when anyone suspected of collaborating with the enemy Russia was hanged. That spread fear among the people, enhanced with the fact that it was actually hardly ever known what a given person was sentenced and executed for.

Owing to all the above factors, people stopped feeling safe in their own houses. Many of them decided to leave their houses and flee from the unknown – not from the war, as they had not experienced it yet. In the history of Galicia there started a period of exile and wandering far into the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. With the front line cutting through Galicia people were forced to withdraw to safer areas, far from the battlefields³⁶. The exile started with spontaneous escapes from places of former residence in fear of the imminent war. The sense of danger was

32. APRz-S, AMG 93, 8.

33. W. Kijowski, *Pamiętnik inspektora policji*, 9; B. Świeykowski, *Z dni grozy w Gorlicach - od 25 IX 1914 do 2 V 1915* (Kraków, 1919), 11.

34. J. Budacki, *Pamiętnik z okresu walk pozycyjnych pod Gorlicami* (Diary of the time of war, manuscript gathered in Regional Museum in Gorlice), 3–4.

35. W. Kijowski, *Pamiętnik inspektora policji*, 8.

36. The issues of war refugees in the Habsburg monarchy during the First World War have not been discussed in detail yet, see for example: K. Ruszała, *Działalność polityków Koła Polskiego w Wiedniu na rzecz pomocy Polakom zesłanym w głąb Austro-Węgier podczas I wojny światowej (zarys problemu)*, [in:] *Front wschodni I wojny światowej*, 153–169; B. Hoffmann-Holter, *"Abreisendmachung?" Jüdische Kriegsflüchtlinge in Wien 1914-1918* (Wien, 1995); W. Mentzel, *Kriegsflüchtlinge in Cisleithanien im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Wien, 1997) (unpublished dissertation gathered in Library of the University of Vienna).

enhanced by press propaganda: many illustrations were published, presenting the brutality of the Russian army. On 11 August 1914 the authorities issued a rescript which said that evacuation of population was to take place only when it was required by military operations. The displaced people were supposed to support themselves financially and if they were unable to do that, district authorities were obliged to find suitable funds. Those unfit to work were to be treated according to the law on war benefits of 26 December 1912³⁷. A special instruction was issued on transport and accommodation of refugees from Galicia and Bukovina³⁸. Particular district authorities were to send information to the central authorities about which districts could provide suitable room for the evacuees. The evacuation from East Galicia to the central and western parts of the crown land caused many problems. There was overpopulation and problems with jobs for the displaced people. In some towns receiving refugees was not possible for strategic and military reasons, for example in Nowy Sącz, where the military headquarters were planned to be situated³⁹.

As the front moved, the areas which had been planned to accommodate the evacuees became military zones and they were not safe anymore. The people had to move further westwards. In September the evacuation of Cracow was announced, and a day later – of districts near Cracow. Those were voluntary evacuations and they did not bring the expected effect. Well-off families, which could afford it, left of their own free will to live in large cities (Vienna, Prague, Brno, Graz, Salzburg, Linz, etc.). Those who did not have a chance to do that were assigned to barrack camps situated in crown lands: Moravia, Bohemia, Styria or the Austrian Littoral. The people in exile were often supported by mutual-aid societies organized in larger cities. Often they were helped by politicians and officials from Galicia, working and living in the capital. Along with the evacuation of civilians, evacuation of offices started, following the lead of the capital itself. The main Galician authorities for the most part of the war also stayed in exile, eventually remaining with a majority of their administration organs in the area free from hostilities (in Białą).

The evacuation of the people from Galicia was carried out in a chaotic manner. This was pointed out by Władysław Długosz, a member of the Imperial Council in Vienna, deputed from Galicia, in his speech delivered on 14 December 1917 in the Vienna Parliament after its re-establishment. He said that the necessity of leaving was kept secret until the last moment: it was only when the train pulled into the station that evacuation was announced and the inhabitants were forced to leave

37. K. Ruszała, *Działalność polityków Koła Polskiego w Wiedniu*, 155.

38. Centralny Derżawnyj Istorycznyj Archiw Ukrainy we Lwowie (Central Historical State Archive of the Ukraine in Lviv, for further quotation see: CDIAUL), fond (f.) 146, opis (op.) 4, sprawa (spr.) 5265, k. 111–118: Instruktion betreffend die Beförderung und Unterbringung von Flüchtlingen aus Galizien und der Bukowina.

39. CDIAUL, f. 146, op. 4, spr. 5265, k. 124.

their homes without preparation, without their belongings and often without extra clothes – they did not know where and for how long they were going. Długosz compared that with the manner of evacuation in East Prussia, where the refugees would receive all instructions at a proper notice. This was definitely not the case in the evacuation of the people from Galicia⁴⁰. Some of them, placed far from their homeland, in barrack camps, returned later to Galicia, some died of exhaustion and illnesses and now lie at cemeteries in today's Czech Republic. Some were forcibly expelled after the war. It must be said that their lives changed into misery from the start of the war through exile and return.

The first months of the war in Galicia were a period of fear, panic and social unrest. The question arises, whether local authorities attempted to appease social chaos at that time in West Galician cities. First of all, the directives came from Lviv, *ergo*, from the national authorities in Vienna, thus it was impossible not to obey them. Still, in many cases local administration was impotent faced with military authority. No one could express their objection towards punishments inflicted by the military or war sentences for suspected espionage (not always justified). Also, soon after the start of the war the inhabitants for the first time in their lives experienced exile and wandering. In many cases they were put in barrack camps. For many of them it was the first time they had ever left their neighbourhood and gone to another crown land within Austro-Hungary. It needs to be said that society was not aware at first what that war was. It was only in retrospect that visions were confronted with reality, as a result of which many inhabitants of Galician towns must have come to a conclusion that the proper meaning of the word “war” could be learned only by one who had experienced it.

40. *Mowa eksc. Władysława Długosza wygłoszona dnia 14. grudnia 1917 r. w Komisji Wojskowej Delegacji Austriackiej*, Kraków b.r.w., 10. (Speech delivered Władysław Długosz on 14 December 1917).

LOYALTIES AND DISLOYALTIES

The Question of Treason and Collaboration in the First World War and the Ruthenian “Irredenta”



MARC STEGHERR



Abstract

Slavic national minorities within the Empire like the Ruthenians were being accused of collaborating with the Russian enemy, right before and during the World War. The heir to the throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, suspected this to be a trick used by Polish and Hungarian Aristocracy to divert attention from their own shortcomings. The way Ruthenians and other smaller nations were treated in the army was a sign that radical reform was urgently needed. The reform concepts died together with the heir apparent in Sarajevo and soon the question of who was to blame for the ultimate defeat died with them. The independent states which were created had no immediate interest to make enquiries. Only the diaspora, monarchist circles, personalities whose careers were shattered with the end of the monarchy and representatives of the so-called minor nations (e.g. the Ruthenians) whose aspirations for statehood did not materialize defended and accused – the starting point of an apologetic literature which has not attracted much attention yet. My paper will describe the antagonistic developments within the monarchy on the eve of the World War, the structural problems which were entrenched even when reform concepts arose supported by Croat or Ruthenian politicians. The smaller nationalities who had not much to gain from a collapse of the Danube Monarchy became passionate adherents of reform, defenders of the Emperor and simultaneously an object of stern accusations of treason. This turned the tide when persecutions intensified discontent. But the smaller nations were among those who fought to the end. Memoirs of military personnel and politicians, but also literary texts and essays published after the war shed light on the hopes and illusions lost with the end of the state which was considered to be a home especially for the so-called small nations.

Keywords

Treason, Military Justice, Ukrainians/Ruthenians, Irredenta

ABOUT THE subject of treason the Berlin journalist Margret Boveri wrote in her opus magnum published in 1956 "Treason in the 20th century"¹: "Treason has become a commonplace in our life, so completely, as if it had erected its own secret and utterly non-transparent-powerful empire on a level which does not coincide with peoples, nations, constitutions, religious communities, but destroying and transforming all by permeating them...Nowadays we celebrate as heroes and martyrs who had been hanged as traitors yesterday."² Boveri had the conspirators of 20th July 1944 in mind or a Richard Sorge who had bespoken the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the German one on the Soviet Union (with success) and who finished his life on the gallows in Japan in 1944. Today the young American private Bradley Manning who many hail as a hero is faced with a life imprisonment of at least 52 years. Manning is taken for a whistle-blower who leaked documents to Wikileaks about the atrocities committed by US soldiers in Iraq. After the Second World War the Norwegian Vidkun Quisling became the embodiment of a national traitor, just like the Frenchmen Pétain, Darlan, Laval or the American poet Ezra Pound who was even exhibited in a cage to demonstrate to everyone that someone who had collaborated with the Nazi occupators was the ultimate enemy of civilized human society. Even Stauffenberg and those hundreds of German officers and politicians who tried to kill Hitler in July 1944 and who are today commonly revered as heroes were, for a long time after the Second World War, treated as traitors who would have worked in favour of Germany's enemies and the defeat of their own nation. Stauffenberg and many of his comrades acted on the basis of their Christian faith, out of moral obligation because they felt their nation's honour would be soiled forever if they did not resist. Quisling or Pound became traitors in the eyes of their respective home countries out of political conviction. They shared the ideology of the occupiers, and were even convinced that treason was necessary to open a better future. The figure of the United States as a materialistic hegemon which did not contribute anything to humanity but repression, a multi-ethnic melting pot with no cultural identity was an accuse already hurled at the multinational Austrian Empire, whether by nationalist movements in Bohemia or in the German speaking parts by Georg Ritter von Schönerer, a politician and author deeply admired by the man who would later become head of the National Socialist Party and German dictator.

1. Margret Boveri: *Der Verrat im XX. Jahrhundert. Das sichtbare Geschehen*. rde-Band 23; *Der Verrat im XX. Jahrhundert. Das unsichtbare Geschehen*. rde-Band 24. Rowohlt Verlag Hamburg.
2. "Treason has become a commonplace in our everyday life, so universally as if it had erected its own secret and intransparently-powerful empire on a level which does not coincide with peoples, nations, constitutions, religious communities, but permeates all while destroying and transforming everything...Today as heroes and martyrs those are being celebrated who yesterday were hanged as traitors." [Boveri, M.: *Der Verrat im XX. Jahrhundert*, rde-Band 23, 12.].

Before the First World War loyalties had already become fragile in the Danube monarchy as the political and social elite, mainly Germans, Magyars and Poles, kept disregarding the cultural, social and political interests of the minorities, mainly of Slavic origin, thereby provoking a general dissatisfaction which evolved into open disloyalty and even resistance and treason during the war. The Ruthenians in Western Ukraine generally counted as the most loyal before the war, but were suddenly considered to be traitors simply because they were orthodox. The mistrust of Orthodoxy combined with suspicions of nationalism in the case of the Serbs or even the Croats who were being suspected of illloyalty by the Hungarian government trying to assimilate the minorities by every means. Whether the Serbs had legitimate interests or were simply striving for a Greater Serbia did no longer matter. Whether the assassins of Sarajevo were a minority or a group representing the whole Serbian nation with ties into the highest government circles, was discarded as irrelevant in the midst of a heated-up atmosphere. Even the direct victims, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie von Chotek, did no longer count as human beings murdered by a coldblooded, young terrorist, they became objects in a power game played by the hawks on both sides. The assassins were immediately identified with the Serbian nation, an apparently treacherous nation by nature. For Serbia the ultranationalists who had conspired to assassinate Archduke Franz Ferdinand were hailed as heroes, even statues of them were later erected and streets named after them: Nedeljko Čabrinović, Vaso Čubrilović, Veljko Čubrilović, Trifko Grabez, Danilo Ilić, Muhamed Mehmedbašić, Cvjetko Popović, and of course Gavrilo Princip who had fired the deadly shots. The same is true of the Italian Nazario Sauro who was born on Austrian soil but fought for Italy in the First World War – a traitor to the Austrians, a hero in Italian public opinion. Sauro was born in Capodistria on the Austrian Littoral (today Koper, Slovenia), and, after 1866 when Venice and the republic of Venice region were annexed to Italy, Sauro together with Tino Gavardo and Pio Riego Gambini became an ardent promoter of Istrian unification to the Kingdom of Italy. Many of those who supported Istrian irredentism consequentially enrolled voluntarily in the Italian Army during World War I against the Austrian Empire. Some were captured and hanged as traitors by the Austrians. When World War I erupted, Sauro went to Venice, joined other refugees who had gathered in the city and were pressuring Italy to join the conflict on the Entente side. When Italy did join the effort in 1915, Sauro volunteered for the Italian Navy, was assigned to a torpedo unit, accomplishing over sixty missions over a period of 14 months. In June 1916, he was promoted Sub-Lieutenant on the Giacinto Pullino submarine, and awarded a Silver Medal. On 30 July of that year, Sauro's boat was sent over to carry out a sabotage in the Hungarian port of Fiume (now Rijeka in Croatia), but it crashed into a rock in the Kvarner Gulf. The crew was intercepted by the Austro-Hungarian destroyer *Satellit*, and imprisoned. Sauro was recognized and placed on trial for

his previous act of treason, and, after facing a military tribunal in Pola (now Pula in Croatia), was sentenced to death and hanged. In Italy he is remembered as a hero.

In Great Britain, soldiers and politicians who no longer wanted to fight, who changed sides or even actively promoted the cause of their countries, for example Irish patriots who opposed a continuation of the war on behalf of the United Kingdom, were considered to be traitors and denied a place on official war memorials in honour of the soldiers killed in action in the 'Great War' while in their home countries they were being idolized. The Peruvian Nobel Prize Laureate for Literature, Mario Vargas Llosa, recently published a novel ("The Dream of the Celt") about the Irish patriot Sir Roger Casement (Irish: Ruairí Dáithí Mac Easmainn) who was accused of betrayal of the United Kingdom and hanged because of high treason, sabotage and espionage against the British crown, in spite of highly prominent advocates like George Bernard Shaw or Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who had already published a fictional novel about Casement in 1912. The Irish enthusiasm for Casement resounded aggressively and woefully when thousands of British soldiers were at the same time fighting for the King and country in Flanders or France³, in a war propagated as a struggle between good and evil⁴. But this conflict quickly became the most brutal war in history and not even the most seasoned serviceman was prepared for the scale of carnage that unfolded before him. Though the percentage was lower than expected and long believed, as Niall Ferguson has shown⁵, for many the horror proved too much, were driven insane and several simply ran away. Sometimes whole battalions were wiped out, leaving just a handful of confused, terrified men. But those who shirked their responsibility soon learned there was no way out of the horror. If they ran away from German guns they would be shot by British ones. The army like any army involved in the World War could no more afford to carry cowards than it could tolerate traitors, and many of those who did flee faced instant retribution with a court martial and death by a firing squad. British and Commonwealth military command executed 306 of its own men during the Great War. The French are thought to have killed about 600. The Germans, whose troops outnumbered the British by two to one, shot 48 of their own men, and the Belgians 13. In 2001, 23 executed Canadians were posthumously honoured by their government, and five troops killed by New Zealand's military command also recently won a pardon. Private Thomas Highgate was the first British soldier to suffer such military justice. Unable to bear the carnage of 7,800 British troops at the Battle of Mons, he had fled and

3. Peter Taylor-Whiffen, "Shot at Dawn: Cowards, Traitors or Victims?", *BBC*, 3. (March 2011) [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/britain_wwone/shot_at_dawn_01.shtml].

4. Weißmann Cf. Karlheinz, 1914: *Die Erfindung des häßlichen Deutschen*. (Berlin 2014); Jörg Friedrich: 14/18: *Der Weg nach Versailles*. Berlin 2014.

5. Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, (London, 2009).

hidden in a barn. He was undefended at his trial because all his comrades from the Royal West Kents had been killed, injured or captured. Just 35 days into the war, Private Highgate was executed at the age of 17. The 16-year-old Herbert Burden, who had lied that he was two years older so he could join the Northumberland Fusiliers, was court-martialled ten months later for fleeing after seeing his friends massacred at the battlefield of Bellwarde Ridge. He faced the firing squad still officially too young to be in his regiment. The soldiers' executions served a dual purpose: to punish the deserters and to dispel similar ideas in their comrades. Courts martial were anxious to make an example and those on trial could expect little support from medical officers. Those condemned to death usually had their sentences confirmed by Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig on the evening following their court-martial; a chaplain was dispatched to spend the night in the cell with the condemned man and execution took place the following dawn. When the time came, the offender was tied to a stake, a medical officer placed a piece of white cloth over the man's heart and a priest prayed for him. Then the firing line was given orders to shoot. Immediately after the shooting, the medical officer would examine the man. If he was still alive, the officer in charge would finish him off with a revolver. Many of the men shot for treason or cowardice later proved they were brave by refusing to be blindfolded for their executions.

Those shot brought such shame on their country that nearly a century on, their names still do not appear on official war memorials. Relatives and supporters of the executed men are fighting to win them a posthumous pardon. They claim the soldiers were blameless, they suffered from a severe psychological trauma. It was not cowardice, they say, which rendered them physically unable to cope with the shocking scenes they had witnessed. Others believe it is impossible to condemn the events of a century ago from a modern-day perspective. Whatever the rights and wrongs, they say, a pardon is inappropriate and impossible. Not one of the executed soldiers would be shot today, the advocates of the court-martialled say today – the military death penalty was outlawed in 1930. Psychologists believe that, even 90 years ago, there was no excuse for killing soldiers who were so obviously under the most extreme stress⁶. Also the comrades of the one to be shot, those in the firing line were under heavy stress. They were exposed to an extremely powerful form of bullying, having to kill their own friends. It sent out the message that you could be next. The American Army's high command often used

6. Shell shock, now called post-traumatic stress disorder, was first recognised in print by Dr Charles Myers of the British Psychological Society in 1915. By the end of the war the army had dealt with more than 80,000 cases. This condition would make soldiers behave erratically or hysterically, or go to the other extreme and become catatonic. Some who had run away claimed they could no longer stand the noise, and it is known that if the eardrums take a constant pounding, the discomfort is too painful to bear. Cf. Taylor, Peter Whiffen, "Shot at Dawn: Cowards, Traitors or Victims?" in *BBC*, 3. March 2011.

humiliation as an extra punishment for desertion, while no American or Australian soldier was executed for treason.

The most prominent example of disloyalty which dominated the front pages of all the major newspapers in the United Kingdom for weeks and months was the one already mentioned of Sir Roger Casement, an Anglo-Irish diplomat for the United Kingdom, a humanitarian activist and poet. Described as the “father of the twentieth-century human rights investigations”, he was awarded honours in 1905 for the Casement Report on the Congo and knighted in 1911 for his important investigations of human rights abuses in Peru. These achievements became overshadowed by his efforts during World War I to gain German collaboration for a 1916 armed uprising in Ireland to gain its independence. In Africa as a young man, Casement first worked for commercial interests before joining the British Colonial Service. In 1891 he was appointed British consul, a profession he followed for more than 20 years. Influenced by the Boer War and his investigation into colonial atrocities against indigenous peoples, Casement developed anti-imperialist opinions. After retiring from the consular service in 1913, he became more involved with the Irish Republican and separatist movement. He sought to obtain German support and weapons for an armed rebellion in Ireland against British rule during the Great War. He was arrested, convicted and executed for treason⁷.

“Ukrainian/Ruthenian Irredenta”

CASEMENT’S CASE sheds light on the strive for emancipation of the peoples on the other battle field of the Great War, the Eastern front. As far as the Ukrainians or to be more precise, the Ruthenians and their conduct in the First World War are concerned, the term “Ukrainian irredenta” or even “Ukrainian treason” is often used, meaning that the Ruthenians would be working towards an annexation of the far-eastern provinces of the Monarchy to the ,motherland’, Tsarist Russia. That was absolutely out of the question if one considers the numerical ratio. After the disintegration of the Kievan Empire of the 10th to 13th century the Ukrainian populated territory was divided in the course of the centuries. A symbolic border ran between the Eastern, the Byzantine, and the Western, Latin cultural space thus creating different identities. The almost four hundred years of Polish rule left wounds, tensions continued, while the Imperial administration was trying to navigate and mediate. Against the Russophiles tending towards

7. Before the trial, the government circulated excerpts from his private journals, known as the Black Diaries, which detailed homosexual activities. Given prevailing views and existing laws on homosexuality, this material undermined support for clemency for Casement. Debates have continued about these diaries: a forensic study concluded in 2002 that Casement had written them, but interpretations differ as to their meaning in his life.

Russia, governors and the military administration already at the outbreak of the war issued a decree on the “preventive arrest of political suspects”. Typical of the chaos following the declaration of war were the errors made with respect to those arrests, especially when shamuses received a bounty from the Austrian military command for a „Russian patriot“. After the central powers in 1915 through a counteroffensive had recaptured the border regions in the East initially occupied by Russia delight abounded which was soon clouded “by the brutal and mostly unjustified actions of the Imperial army against collaborators”⁸: “Arrests, trials and summary executions happened on a daily routine. Victims [...] were mostly to be found among the Ruthenian population and especially the educated classes which was collectively accused of collaboration.”⁹ In the central and Western regions of the Monarchy internment camps were established, one of the largest being Grazer-Thalerhof where until 1917 several thousand Ruthenians died from malnourishment, diseases and maltreatments. Only after those berserk actions of the Austrian administration the moment had come that the Ruthenians or Ukrainians seriously considered a secession from the Monarchy. The origins are of course deep-rooted in the past though namely the Ruthenians, notwithstanding all problems, only in parts seriously thought about giving up the Monarchy. In spite of their number¹⁰ the Ruthenians counted among the “non-historical”, “non-dominating” peoples of the Habsburg Empire because they had their centre outside the Reich giving them a special status¹¹, together with the Italians and the Serbs. This status, with respect to the situation of the Ruthenians in Galicia and the Bucovina, was also described as “internal colonialism” through the Austrian administration, as well as the Polish and Hungarian government. The Ruthenians either responded by idealizing the situation in Galicia and in the Bucovina or express severe criticism¹².

8. Elisabeth Röskau-Rydel, Wende an der galizischen Front, in *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas*, Röskau-Rydel, E. (Hrsg.), (Berlin, 1999), 159.

9. *Ibidem*.

10. Statistically the Ukrainians/Ruthenians in Cisleithania occupied the fourth place, after Germans, Czechs and Poles. A statistics from 1910 shows that a majority of Austrian Ruthenians was living in Galicia (91.17%) and in Bukovina (8.67%), while in Vienna and in the other crown lands only 0.16%. Cf.: (Popyk, 1999), 10.

11. Cf.: Kann, R.: *Das Nationalitätenproblem der Habsburgermonarchie. Geschichte und Ideengehalt der nationalen Bestrebungen vom Vormärz bis zur Auflösung des Reiches im Jahre 1918*. 2 vol.s, Graz/Köln 1964, see Vol. 1, p. 56. Today the larger part of Galicia and Bukovina belongs to Ukraine which was proclaimed an independent state in 1991. The fact that the western territories were part of the Habsburg Monarchy for almost 150 years allows to consider the Ukraine to be one of the successor states of Austria Hungary.

12. Cf.: Cybenko, Larissa, „Vielvölkerstaat“ vs. „Völkerkerker“ im Schaffen der ‚österreichischen Ukrainer‘ um 1900. in *Kakania revisited. Das Eigene und Fremde (in) der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie*, Müller-Funk, Wolfgang/Plener, Peter/Ruthner, Clemens (ed.), (Kultur – Herrschaft – Differenz. Edited by Moritz Csáky, Wolfgang Müller-Funk und Klaus R. Scherpe, vol. 1, 2002) (Tübingen/Basel, 2002) 254-270.

The affirmation has to do with the euphoria around the revolution of 1848, with the loyalty to the Imperial dynasty which earned the Ruthenians the reputation to be the “Tyrolians of the East”. This loyalty was not rewarded if one disregards the hope still cherished by many Ruthenians that belonging to the Monarchy would open access to Western Europe as political and cultural space¹³. This is especially clear in comparison to Tsarist Russia where the Ruthenian or Ukrainian language was forbidden in 1876, where identity and culture were suppressed, whereas in Galicia and in the Bucovina at the same time Ruthenian printing presses and houses were set up. In the 1880s and 90s, Lemberg became a literary centre and a place of refuge for the political and cultural emigration from the Tsar’s Empire. Eastern Galicia was even considered to be a “Ukrainian Piedmont”, part of a myth of coexistence, of the Habsburg myth as a whole, which is of course legitimate, especially if one considers what was to come after 1918. The Ukrainian author Jurij Andrukhovych recounts that the Ruthenian farmers decorated the Emperor’s portrait like the pictures of the Saints with embroidered drapery¹⁴. On the other hand, in the works of Ivan Franko, Ol’ha Kobyljans’ka or Vasyli’ Stefanyk social critique dominates, the background formed by an unveiled rejection of the Imperial-Royal domestic policy in the crown lands. At the turn of the century the critique became more severe in content and tone. A deconstruction of dominating stereotypes, ideas and myths shared by the Ruthenians took place, a kind of Ruthenian “Colonial literature”, circulating around catchwords like resources, exploitation, centre and periphery. Ivan Franko criticized the modest constitutional rights the Ruthenian farmers enjoyed, Lev Vasylovych-Sapohivskyj in his poetical-realistic prose contrasted happiness and the silence of the Ruthenian villages with the boundless pretensions of the Polish magnates regarding soil ownership and the lack of rights of the Ruthenian farmers. Franko ironized the “glorious national tradition” of the Polish aristocracy. The widely held belief that the Imperial government had offered access to education and national emancipation to the Ruthenians, is contested by the prematurely deceased author Les’ Hrnjuk (1883-1911), given the high rate of illiteracy which was especially high among Austrian Ruthenians. It says a lot about the Ruthenians’ situation that the prison topos, the Habsburg Empire as the “peoples’ prison” (Völkerkerker) appears in the literary work of several Ruthenian writers, e.g. in that of Denys Lukijanovych (1873-1965), Hnat Chotkevych or the Bucovinian author Ol’ha Kobyljans’ka (1863-1942). She lends the subject ‘World War’ and particularly the motif of recruiting a harrowingly tragic quality. In the story “Sylvan Mother. A sketch from Ukrainian life” the Hucul woman Dakija divines that she will not see her son again who was draft-

13. Cf.: Oksana Zabuško, *Filosofija ukrajins’koji ideji ta jevropejs’kyj kontekst* [Philosophy of the Ukrainian idea and the European Context], (Kiev/Kyiv, 1993) 16ff.

14. Andrukhovych, J., *Dezorijentacija na miscevošti* [Disorientation in the field], (Ivano-Frankivsk, 1999), 7.

ed into the army. The most heartfelt scene of the story is the farewell of the mother from her son. The Hucul mother prays to the Godmother and to the Empress to protect her child. Also the motif of treason the Ruthenians were being suspected of is the leitmotif of several stories Kobyljans'ka. "The letter of a soldier sentenced to death to his wife" is about a Ruthenian soldier who fell asleep on his knees in the ditch while on guard and was therefore considered a deserter. The knack of the story is that the judges who pass the death sentence do not understand the language of the soldier trying to defend himself: "They want to shoot me for treason. Nobody speaks my language. She was so wide and derelict. Who would hear her? She is nothing to a stranger. [...] Me and my language will have to die." Ukrainian respectively Ruthenian, the soldier's mother tongue, becomes the "language of treason", just like Irish in the eyes of the British military administration, or the languages of the Celtic speaking minorities in France which during the First World War were suspected of sharing the inimical attitude towards the majoritarian nation which led Roger Casement to treason¹⁵. The idea of a "Ukrainian Irredenta" was also fuelled by linguistic prejudices and reflects the desperate disruption of the Ukrainian people and of other European minorities in the time of the Great war. It is also demonstrated in the masterly story of Kobyljans'kas with the speaking title "Judas", which plays beginning of December 1914. An old Ruthenian mountain farmer whose son was drafted to the Imperial army is arrested one day by a Russian company and he should tell them where the Austrian troops are stationed. The Russians hand him some coins which he puts into his pocket without further reflection. The peasant assures them that he knows nothing, but is beaten up terribly, and finally he leads the Russians into the woods where they happen to meet an Austrian patrol whose four soldiers are shot dead by the Russians. In punishment that he had not shown them the way immediately the peasant has to bury the dead ones. In doing so he discovers that among the dead is his own son. He surrenders to an Austrian policeman but asks him that he may for a last time visit his son's grave where he hangs himself. When in the closing scene the policeman finds the dead peasant above his son's grave the deep silence of winter reigns in the forest. All is covered by snow, the symbol of death. The poor farmer becomes the embodiment of a persecuted people whose hopes were shattered and whose land became the "great battlefield of the great war"¹⁶, in the words of Joseph Roth.

On the other side of the border, where Ruthenian was not to be spoken in public, treason became a standard term, even an obsession in the course of the war. Rumours circulated about treason in the government and soon reached the front. The execution of Colonel Mjasojedov in March 1915 for espionage for Germany

15. Cf.: Primary Documents - Sir Roger Casement's Speech Following his Conviction as a Traitor, 29 June 1916 [http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/dublin_casement.htm].

16. J.Roth, "Reise durch Galizien [1924]", *Gauß & Pollack* (1992) 95.

seemed to prove those allegations¹⁷. Everyone seemed to betray everyone, the satirist Karl Kraus wrote in his magazine "Fackel" ("Torchlight"). A relatively small, underprivileged and suppressed ethnic group like the Ruthenians, sharing faith and origin with the dangerous neighbour, could easily become the target of accusations that they were betraying the Empire. However, the atmosphere was so heated up by nationalist rancour that in Russia the Tsar's wife who was from a German dynasty, and even the Austrian Emperor's wife, Zita of Bourbon-Parma, was not spared the stigma of treason. She must be a traitor as she was 'French', some speculated¹⁸. The mob had likewise abused Marie Antoinette, the wife of the last French king, as the "Austrian", responsible for the most improbable crimes, which induced the conservative political philosopher Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn to assume misogynist attitudes which come to the surface namely in times of political unrest – the woman, the defenceless and the weak as the first victims of a brutal, male world of war. A footnote to the whole complex of treason, never spelled out in public, only in legitimistic circles, but a footnote which underlines the whole issue of treason and loyalty is the fact that Austrian politicians and officers who had loyally served the Emperor in wartimes not only lent a helping hand when the new social orders were established. Karl Renner, social democrat, state chancellor of German-Austria after 1918 and officer in the war, was an ardent defender of the monarchy before and during the war, so much so that Friedrich Adler speaking in the name of the party's left wing accused Renner of owing a "spirit of unsophisticated mendacity" ("Geist der biedereren Verlogenheit"). The Hungarian aristocrat Miklós Horthy, who started out as a Frigate Lieutenant in the Austro-Hungarian Navy in 1896, attained the Admiralty in 1918 and became Commander-in-Chief of the Austro-Hungarian Navy in the last year of the World War. After the war, in 1920 Horthy established a regency government in Budapest. When his former Emperor, Charles I, who had never officially abdicated, tried to regain the throne in March 1920, at least in Hungary, Horthy was adamant and refused to give in. Charles reminded Horthy of his tearful pledge of loyalty made at Schönbrunn Palace in

17. Orlando Figes, *Die Tragödie eines Volkes. Die Epoche der russischen Revolution 1891 bis 1924* [A People's Tragedy. The Russian Revolution 1891-1924. Jonathan Cape, London 1996], (Berlin 1998), 291f. ["In the hinterland rumours were spreading about treason in government circles which soon made it to the front. The German origin of the Tsarina and of other government personalities as well as the execution of Colonel Mjasojedov, one of the protégés of Suchomlinov, in March 1915 for espionage for Germany seemed to corroborate such conspiracy theories. A Bolshevik soldier for example remembered a sergeant's efforts to explain the reasons for retreat to his soldiers: "There are many traitors and spies in the High Command of our army, such as the minister of war Suchomlinov who is to blame for our lack of grenades, and Mjasojedov who has betrayed our fortresses to the enemy." When he had finished a soldiers' cook drew the conclusion from that: "Fish rots from the head down. What kind of Tsar is that who surrounds himself with thieves and deceivers? It is clear as daylight that we will lose the war."].

18. Cf.: Emmy Gehrig, *Umjubelt, verkannt, verbannt. Kaiserin und Königin Zita*, (Wels, 1955).

November 1918, and of the sworn oath of obedience to the Habsburg monarch from which he had never been released. Horthy reminded him that he had more recently sworn an oath to the Hungarian nation. A second attempt Charles made in October 1920 failed as well. Horthy excused himself by pointing to the risk of civil war, and Renner made a career in the republican system as the monarchy was finally lost. By the standards of legitimist circles which were still strong in Hungary and in Austria, but not strong enough, both men were to be considered traitors to the cause. The oath they had once sworn would be valid still. For Austrian republicans, respectively Hungarian nationalists and anti-communists the term 'traitor' was not applicable, according to the famous pun of Napoleon's foreign secretary, Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand. During the Congress of Vienna Talleyrand told the Russian Tsar Alexander I: "Treason, Sire, is only a question of date."

NATIONALISM AT WORK: JUSTIFYING WORLD WAR ONE



CĂTĂLIN TURLIUC

Abstract

The present paper deals with a largely discussed topic throughout different national historiographies during the last century: the connection between nationalism and war in the context of the modernization process in the first decades of the 20th century. It is known that a small spark occurred in the Balkans marked the beginning of the first total war, a conflict with huge and often unpredicted consequences. World War I, or the Great War as it is remembered by many nations, had complex sources, was triggered by a series of factors and also witnessed a series of innovations both in the way it was conducted (breadth and amplitude, weaponry, strategy and tactics, etc.), and in the way it was perceived and internalized by the participant nations and their societies. The fact that among other factors nationalism and propaganda have modelled attitudes, behaviours and mentalities at the dawn and during this huge conflict is a historically recognized truth. The present work aims to present and analyse the way in which nationalism dressed in new clothes by propaganda was used by the political elites in order to motivate, support and conduct the military actions and the political deeds in that turbulent period. Beyond the information that supports this analysis and its inherent comparative nature, the author proposes a heuristic model of analysis derived from the “Social change” analysis. Beginning with the various means of propaganda used by the belligerent nations, the numerous testimonies (either individual or collective) which represent valuable sources, this work will highlight fundamental aspects of the way in which both the public and the individual perception of the war were influenced by nationalistic themes developed before and during the Great War. Romanian realities were used as a case study in this respect. The conclusions of this work emphasize the fact that nationalistic manipulation has become an efficient way of influencing public opinion in modern societies, especially those in a state of deep conflict.

Keywords

Nationalism, Propaganda, World War I, Imperialism, Ideologies, Manipulation

IN THE last three decades, a lot has been said and written about a topic which played a major role in the modern world, namely nationalism. A plethora of articles, studies, essays and books of unequal size and value became available for students in nationalism and many scientific reunions were dedicated to the origins, evolution and consequences of nationalism at a world scale. Scholars from different fields ranging from history and sociology to anthropology and political science, to mention just a few research domains, were involved in a never ending debate about one of the most important features of the modern world that is to say nationalism. Generated mainly by the end of the Cold War and its consequences, amplified by the contemporary globalization process and pinpointed in the middle of the cinematic realities of the international arena, nationalism was dissected, deconstructed, disenchanted, condemned to oblivion or even buried by some, while others argued that, in spite of its numerous critics, nationalism is still alive and its driving forces, perennial values and historical importance are still in force and relevant for the whole world. One can easily find out that in spite of all these debates – we will probably need a whole week just to briefly present all the opinions and the historiography of this topic – it is still difficult to summarize everything and furthermore to extract a desirable and much needed consensus. On the other hand, the scientific literature dedicated to World War I was also very rich and diverse and a new boost was added by the centennial of this huge conflagration. As I have already mentioned in one of my previous papers¹, the First World War has always been a happy-ground for miscellaneous theories which try to explain and sometimes elucidate the evolution of modern societies. This huge confrontation widely considered without precedent was in many ways a revolutionary war in its sheer scale, intensity and consequences. The impact on both military and civilian life through propaganda, ideology, mass conscription and the increased intervention of the state in society was never experienced before. The character of the war was fundamentally different from the earlier conflicts, in that it was based on mass produced weapons, mechanised transport, an increasing role of the home front, etc. In fact, it was the first **total war**, in which the belligerents were compelled to mobilise all their military, industrial and human resources in a conflict unprecedented in its scale and impact. The civilian population on both sides had originally greeted the war with great patriotic fervour but their enthusiasm was gradually eroded as the huge losses in the battles, and especially in the trench warfare, accumulated with no apparent gains. In spite of the future wars - Second World War for instance - the first world conflagration acquired the reputation of being one of the most terrible of all modern conflicts.

It is clear that any attempt in order to relate Nationalism (with all its forms, manifestations and consequences) with World War I is almost instantly exposed

1. Turliuc, C. "Perceptions on World War I" *Transylvanian Review*, 4, XXIII (2014): 12-21.

to a multitude of critics mainly related with the conceptualization of nationalism and its varieties and also with the diverse perspectives regarding the first total war in history. It is largely accepted that quite often group identity (ethnicity, nationality, confession, citizenship and so on) was strongly associated with various conflicts during history. In the last centuries, this reality was accentuated due to the growing number of divisions operated in the society and on international arena alike. The modernization process, which started three centuries ago and still accompany us in large geopolitical areas, represents the fertile background on which various forms of modern identities were created, established and promoted. Modernization often underlines differences and sometimes triggers conflicts. How to manage these forms of identity became one of the key topics for the ruling elites in all the corners of the world. The internal process of social engineering at the level of individual societies and states was doubled on the international arena by the same issues concerning collective identities. Taboos regarding “the other” were transformed and coined into political instruments for discrimination. Even science was used and abused in order to produce evidence of the supposed benefits obtained through homogenisation and assimilation.

In order to ascertain the place and role of Nationalism as one of the influential factors which triggered World War I, it is mandatory to define and elucidate the varieties of nationalisms active at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. This is a most needed approach because Nationalism continues to be one of the most controversial political currents even nowadays. More than two centuries have passed since its genesis and crystallization and nationalism still is appealing both in the countries with a democratic and liberal tradition, as well as in the rest of the world. In order to investigate this complex concept, we must operate a distinction between nationalism as ideology, as political movement, or as a cultural artefact. Although connected with each other, these aspects require a specific analysis which will highlight the fact that there is no unitary phenomenon called *nationalism*. Also, we must approach different types of nationalism and the historic contexts they appeared within, in order to discover which structure of its specific discourse is. Ever since it has appeared in history, there were numerous attempts to define it. It has even been said that the number of definitions is equal to the number of those who dealt with it². The debate, beyond the political, diplomatic and geopolitical implications, is a conceptual and normative one.

As we are all aware, sociology, the study of the international relations, political sciences, cultural anthropology, social psychology, geopolitics, political philosophy (normative theories), international law and, last but not least, history tried to define nationalism. The result of these attempts was the elaboration of a whole

2. Sugar, P. F., “From Ethnicity to Nationalism and Back Again” in *Nationalism. Essays in Honour of Louis L. Snyder*, Ed. Palumbo, M., Shanahan, W. O. (London, 1981), 67.

set of theories regarding nationalism. In order to better highlight our position and to avoid certain confusions, we shall present the main categories which developed theories on nationalism: The normative theory³; Theories on nationalism seen as political extremism⁴; Theories that connect the appearance and development of the nationalism with the process of modernization; The primordialist theories that are against the fact that nation and nationalism are modern historic realities; Theories of the civilization cycles, where nationalism is explained as being transitional, perishable as a historic reality; History theories that identify nations as being fundamental, pre-existing units and which consider nations as being primary elements of development and / or involution; Social integrative theories that regard nationalism as a surrogate of religion; Theories on the formation of the state which explain nationalism as a product of the centralization and uniformization politics; Theories of the global order⁵ which, usually, do not take into consideration the internal evolution of the states but theorize on nationalism.

One well-known scholar (James Goodman)⁶ has realized the following taxonomy regarding the theories on nationalism: the ethno-national perspective, of the modernization, of the state centralization, of the affirmation of the new social class and, finally, of the unequal development. Other authors, we only mention here Daniel Weinstock⁷, operate the distinction civic nationalism - ethnic nationalism (ethnonationalism) and formulate judgments based on it. Philip Gerrans⁸ talks about the offensive and the defensive nationalism. It only takes this short attempt, which synthesizes the theories on nationalism, to be a good reason for the question: Why all these theories and *thus* definitions of nationalism? The answer can be only one: nationalism is not necessarily a particularism. It is universal as ideology and vision, it is the basis of the present world order and anyone who would try to imagine today a non-national world would soon realize how stable the nation states world is. Yet, despite being so general, nationalism manifested itself – and still does – in particular forms. That is why it is easier to talk about nationalisms with different determinations, contents and aspects, chronotopically layered in modern and contemporary history. The concept of nationalism is proteiform and thus difficult to fix within immutable boundaries. Moreover, nationalism has an inner regeneration force which makes it autonomous as a social force

3. See, Walzer, M., *Spheres of Justice* (New York, 1983).

4. Mudde, C., "Defining the Extreme Right Party family" *West European Politics*, 19, 2 (1986): 225-248.

5. Rasser K. R, Thompson, W.R., *War and State Making: The Shaping of the Global Powers in Studies in International Conflict*, vol. 2 (Boston, 1989).

6. Goodman, J., *Nationalism and Transnationalism: The National Conflict in Ireland and European Union Integration* (Avenbury, 1996).

7. Weinstock, D. "Există o apărare morală a naționalismului", in Ed. Baertschi, B., Mulligan, K. (București, 2010), 121-152.

8. Gerrans, P., "Localizarea naționalismului", in *Nationalisme*, 21-40.

and, at the same time, self-sufficient. Essentially, nationalism exists by always underlining the national identity that it constantly enhances, giving it an anti-entropic, centripetal, stabilizing force. Still, what is at the basis of this historic form of social agglutination that is the nation and which generated this globalizing vocation of nationalism? The main characteristic of nations, which is to be found in most definitions of the nation, is transgenerationality⁹. Nations exist in order to project the past (as it is collectively remembered by the community) into the future. They are continuous future projects and have the right to self-determination especially for being able to organize and administrate their future. "The nation is an ideal and a memory at the same time, a history and a prophecy, too, a creative prophecy" wrote Henri Hauser (1916)¹⁰ in the midst of World War I. This is the world order in which we live, and which was forged by history. At this level, nationalism is proteic and has always new shapes, changing just to prevent and stop a change at a general worldwide level. I shall draw a conclusion about the concept-term nationalism, underlining, again, its proteic character and its versatility.

Nationalism, Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism to mention just these "-isms" are largely associated in their infancy and early stages of development with the 19th Century, nicknamed by many "the long Century" or "the Lead Century". Nationalism was combined with all the major ideologies and doctrines since then and it is a fact that its regenerative force is an outstanding one. One can easily assess that Nationalism survived all these combinations and developed a chameleonic shape. In the second part of the 19th Century, Nationalism began to change itself in a "poisonous" form by engulfing Social-Darwinism. This combination introduced the anthropological dimension of Nationalism with the visible results acknowledged since then, especially during the last century. "Survival of the fittest", "The big fish swallows the small ones" etc. were largely accepted slogans. The mixture between Nationalism and Imperialism melted in a *Real politick* cloak, generated the scramble for colonies as well as the combination of Nationalism with modernity and democracy offered a strong incentive to national liberation movements and the reality of nation-states. The concept of self-determination became one of the most powerful tools in shaping the new international reality and new world order. It is quite obvious that Imperialism does not get along well with movements for national emancipation. Thus, a lot of "social" and "national" ammunition was gathered by the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the last one waiting to "explode" at the first occasion.

We can agree that the most influential and significant ideologies and doctrines in the late 19th century and early 20th century were imperialism, nationalism, and social-democracy. We will consider only imperialism and nationalism, which

9. Smith, A.D., "Toward a Global Culture?" *Theory, Culture and Society*, 7 (1990): 171-191; Smith, A.D., *National Identity* (London, 1991).

10. Hauser, H., *Le Principe des Nationalites: ses origines historique* (Paris, 1916), 15.

in spite of certain similarities were largely opposed to each other in aims if we consider the geopolitical context of the beginning of the 20th Century. Both were aggressive toward the established order on the political map of the world, both advocated major changes in this respect, both were very influential among elites and grassroots. A serious source of tension was racism (based on Social-Darwinism) as well as the new science of geopolitics. Both reinforced the imperialist aims of the Great Powers. One should not forget the important doctrines of Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism which came into collision when the German *Drang nach Osten* was materialised in the Berlin-Baghdad Railway project.

In what concerns mentalities and *forma mentis*, the only way of solving international crises was in the opinion of politicians, soldiers and public opinion at large in the period we refer at, the war or the political compromise. Gradually, as soon as successive compromises arose from different international crises the chances of preserving the peace by this mean diminished proportionally (i.e. a new compromise was out of question for the Tsar and the Russian public opinion in the eve of World War I). The whole evolution of European societies (the main feature of this evolution was the constant growth in almost every field of activity beginning with industry, arm race, and ending with demographic factor or social discrepancies) was itself a fertile background for a “warrior attitude” adopted by a big part of the elite and public opinion. The self-confidence induced by the “progress”, the absence of a major European war in the last four decades (one can consider that the generation of the First World war never experienced a major military conflict), the growing intolerance and jingoistic attitude towards the “others”, the permanent need for heroic acts – cultivated by romanticism and later on by the end of the 19th century by neo-traditionalism) were alongside other factors huge stimuli in order to determine aggressive attitudes and mentalities¹¹.

There are a lot of historians who are convinced that World War I was a spectacular conflict in which no major power had well before its start defined its objectives. What were then the reasons for such a gigantesque confrontation? There are, of course, a plethora of answers as well as a lot of different opinions. Many historians recognized in the First World War the end of an era and the dawn of a new one. Very often the long years of peace before the outbreak of World War I were regarded as an idyllic period of stability and prosperity, marked by a remarkable progress and sustained by a general acceptance of order and authority, undisturbed by violence, immorality and revolution. “La belle époque” was the widespread brand for those years. Nowadays we have plenty of reasons to be more critical in our approach and the simple fact that Social Darwinism was tolerated and applied sometimes in public policies, while racism, anti-Semitism, etc. were

11. I have discussed this topic in a previous paper. See, Turliuc, “Perceptions on World War I” *Transylvanian Review*, 4, XXIII (2014).

vigorously present is a good reason to reconsider the “pink” landscape described by many. The potential instability of assimilation and integration, the insidious spread of the meme that identifies some human beings as aliens, the combustible character of the ethnically mixed borderlands, the volatility of the economic life, the bitter struggles between old multi-ethnic empires and the rising nation states with their respective ideologies, the social convulsions generated by the polarization of the societies, all the above mentions were the fuel for a major conflict¹². We are aware that the immense quantity of documents and historical sources available, the abundance of theories and interpretations make every attempt give a full explanation – an exhaustive one – to the long-time causes, immediate origins, developments, and outcomes of this terrible and spectacular event a utopia or a futile attempt.

Let me focus, at this point, on the way in which the authorities in power then – at the dawn and during WWI – used Nationalism as an effective tool to channel the emotions of the public, to strengthen the internal cohesion of the society, to boost the will to fight the enemy and of course to accept the hardships and sacrifices imposed by war. During the pre-war period, Nationalism was mainly used to manipulate and induce in the public opinion the fact that the cohesion of the society, the internal solidarity, the whole internal political and social order, not to mention the economic one, were put in danger by foreigners inside the body of the society and, of course by the external enemies depicted as envious or even barbaric, motivated by hatred and characterized by a lack of culture and civilisation. Internationalism as was promoted mainly by the left wing parties (and extreme political left) as an instrument of political fight in order to get to power was often seen as a treason to one’s history and tradition. Pacifism was generally appreciated and promoted in certain intellectual circles without a decisive power to popularize and impose this attitude at a wider scale. Furthermore, as I have mentioned before, almost all European societies had not experienced a large scale war since the middle of the 19th Century and the social memory was not under the bitter influence of a major conflict sufferings provoked by modern warfare technology, tactics and strategies. The nationalistic drive associated with war propaganda was one of the main factors which determined the World War I.

Once the initial war fever had diminished, it was imperative to remind people, both at home and in the trenches, of what they were fighting for. The major themes included a call to arms and a request for economic and financial increased participation, better explained national policies, an effort to channel emotions such as courage and hatred, a much needed policy to urge the population to preserve resources, etc. Massive resources and huge efforts were allocated by the govern-

12. All these were invoked by a well-known historian in a different historical set-up. See Ferguson, N., *The War of the World* (London, 2007), XIX-XX.

ments of the countries involved in WWI in order to shape opinions, to influence and to build international support all these facts having a major contribution in establishing giant propaganda machines, which still work nowadays. Manipulation became one of the most important tools in order to achieve political and also national objectives. Above anything else, one tactic used by all the belligerents was to strengthen the national identity in order to promote and boost patriotism. Iconic figures were used such as Britannia, John Bull, The German Eagle, the French cockerel or Marianne, Michael the Brave, Stephen the Great, and so on¹³.

In the Romanian case, it is worth mentioning that in spite of its “size” and “weight” among other belligerents the national propaganda was fuelled by the strong widely shared opinion among elites as well as grassroots that the Romanian unity must be achieved by all means. A problem which confronted the patriotic propaganda especially during neutrality (1914-1916) was determined by the fact the Romanians in the East were under Russian occupation while the ones in the North and the West were subjugated by Austria Hungary. Newspapers such as *Adevărul* and *Dimineața* were in favour of the Entente while *Dreptatea*, *Seara* or *Minerva* was on the opposite side. *Moldova*, *Opinia*, *Steagul*, and *Ziua* were favourable to German interests while *Facla* to the French ones. One of the major newspapers was *Universul* and its position generated a strong legal battle finally won by the group which supported the Entente¹⁴. Nevertheless, it is well-known that the fate of Transylvania and Bukovina was highlighted on Romanian public agenda. Finally, as expected, the pro Entente mood won and Romania engaged itself in World War I against the Central Powers. Beside the internal national propaganda, which is well documented in a plethora of studies and articles, the Romanians were active abroad during the neutrality period mainly in France, Italy, Switzerland, etc.¹⁵ An iconic description of the situation during 1914-1916 and beyond this period concerning our topic is to be found in a book authored by Pamfil Șeicaru¹⁶.

The main task of this effort was to convince the politicians and the public opinion in different countries about the rightness of the Romanian national aspirations endorsed by historical, demographic, ethnographic and geographic facts and events. Personalities such as: N. Iorga, C. Istrate, I. Cantacuzino, C. Diamandy, N. Basilescu, Take Ionescu, O. Tafrali, D. Pangrati, T. Vuia, V. Lucaciu, G. Moroianu, O. Goga, C.G. Mironescu, V. Stoica, E. Văcărescu, C. Mille, D. Hurmuzescu, I. Găvanescu etc. were active abroad delivering conferences, writing articles, meet-

13. See Welch, D., *Propaganda for patriotism and nationalism*, www.bl.uk./world-war-one/articles/patriotism-and-nationalism.

14. See for a lot of interesting details, Șeicaru, P., *Istoria presei românești* (București, 2007).

15. See, Bulei I. *Arcul așteptării 1914-1915-1916* (București, 1981), 143-145.

16. Șeicaru, P., *România în Marele Război* (București, 1994).

ing peers and relevant political figures in order to promote the Romanian national interests¹⁷. Well-known scholars like Mario Roques or R. Seton-Watson were invited in Romania and they became strong advocates of the Romanian national cause. Books with strong national content were translated and sent abroad as well¹⁸. Newspapers published abroad like “Libertatea”, “Foaia poporului”, “Renașterea Română” “America”, “Tribuna”, “Românul”, etc. all in the United States, or “La Roumanie” and “La Transylvanie” in France were subsidized by the Romanian communities or by the Romanian government¹⁹. A quite convincing result of the nationalist propaganda abroad was the establishment of Romanian military units, on a voluntary basis, recruited in POW camps in France, Italy or Russia²⁰.

As general conclusions, I would like to emphasize few important aspects:

Nationalism could be seen as a very important autonomous social force during modern times;

Combined with Social-Darwinism, Nationalism became an explosive tool in the hands of the decision-makers and manipulators. This process took part since the second part of the 19th Century;

Nationalism was, and still is in certain parts of the world, in a competing disposition with other major ideologies. Sometimes, it combines itself with such doctrines or ideologies without losing its appeal both to the elites and the grass-roots;

Nationalism was present in the empires (multinational) as well as in nation-states or in the midst of national minorities;

The nationalistic drive associated with war propaganda was one of the main factors which determined the World War I.

A new world order based on nation-states, a vision shared by few before World War I, became a reality (at least for Europe) in its aftermath. This is one of the most important legacies of the first total war in the history of mankind.

17. See, Vocila, A., *Comunicarea și propaganda în preajma și în timpul primului război mondial*, <https://andreivocila.files.wordpress.com/2010/07/comunicarea-si-propaganda-in-preajma-si-in-timpul-primului-razboi-mondial.pdf>

18. See, Iorga N., *Breve storia dei Rumeni con special considerazione delle relazioni coll Italia*; Iorga N., *Les derniers elections en Hongrie et les Roumaines*, etc.

19. Pascu, Șt., Marinescu, C. Gh., *Răsunetul internațional al luptei românilor pentru unitate națională* (Cluj-Napoca, 1980), 197.

20. Ethnic Romanians were conscripted in Central Power armies and a part of them was detained as POW in different camps.

THE SOLDIER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE "HOME FRONT" CAPTURED IN THE ROMANIAN WAR SONGS



IULIA-DORINA STANCIU

Abstract

The study re-evaluates the information regarding the First World War that one can find in the military songs and which underlines the impact of this type of event in the life of the Romanian village. By analysing certain significant passages of these military songs, the study targets the evolution of the inter-human relationships within the context of the war. On the one hand, they present details regarding how the soldiers affectively relate to the universe "at home" and their vision on the place of origin. On the other hand, the analysis on how they relate to the universe of love, in the military songs, betrays the way in which the war reconfigures the social space and the possibilities of the actual consumption of love. Moreover, our analysis cannot omit the fact that these songs represent an authentic expression of pain and fear, as long as the state of mind of the soldiers was extremely vulnerable when facing death. Thus, the way in which the soldiers related with the possible encounter with death has become an important part of the study, even more so as death also produced effects on the "home front".

Keywords

military songs, First World War, battle front, home, death, love

THIS STUDY revolves around some materials selected from two folklore collections, one signed by Zamfir Dejeu, Lucia Iștoc and Elena Hlinca Drăgan, *Cântece de cătănie (Military Songs)*, and the other one by Gabriel N. Popescu, *Cântece din zile grele și ale cătăniei mele. Istoricul în versuri populare al Batalionului Vânători de Munte, participant la primul război mondial (Songs from the Difficult Days and My Military Life. The History of the Mountain Hunters Battalion – Participating in the First World War – in Folk Verse)*. In order to keep certain acceptable dimensions of this material, we have selected, with the purpose of exemplifying and supporting these ideas, only some of the military songs preserved in the aforementioned collections.

The main aspect of the analysis is represented, thus, by the war song, an element having a visible intense, durable nature, which captures and notes the distinctive features of how the traditional universe relates to the idea of the military service, and at the same time to the war. The oral universe represents a testimony of the “encounter between tradition and history”¹, reflecting the impact that various historical events, such as the First World War, had on the aboriginal sensibility. The military songs can be perceived as a “transposition of the experience in folklore patterns”², an aboriginal means of preserving events that are important for the Romanian peasant, related to “a certain stage of the historical development of the social life”³ – the establishment of the military service. Joining the army is added to a series of other significant events for an individual’s life, such as marriage, death, etc., considered “passages” of the life cycle⁴, the army being “an institution of the prenuptial age of young men”⁵.

The historical background, the confrontation of the peasant sensibility to the war, has determined a transfer or a loan in terms of structure, topic, melodic line, and rhythm formula, from the military songs (performed at recruitment) towards the songs performed when going to war. Thus, the name of “military song” ended up preserving these “two categories of creations related to different events and different means of existence”⁶.

We must specify that, in this paper, by the name of “military songs”, we refer to war songs. We consider them to be forms of orality or indirect testimonies of

1. Ioana-Ruxandra Frunteletă, *Narațiunile personale în etnologia războiului* (București: Ager, 2004), 7.
2. I.R. Frunteletă, *Narațiunile*, 9.
3. Zamfir Dejeu, Lucia Iștoc, Elena Hlinca Drăgan, *Cântece de cătănie*, vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, Institutul “Arhiva de folclor a Academiei Române”, 2002), 6.
4. Zamfir Dejeu, „Obiceiuri de cătănie” in *Cântece de cătănie*, 5.
5. Z.Dejeu, 8 *apud* Stanca Fotino, *Implicații funcționale ale cântecului de cătănie*, REF, tomul 18, nr. 1, București, 1973, 39.
6. Lucia Iștoc, „Cântecul de cătănie- considerații muzicale”, in *Cântece de cătănie*, 11.

an "individual historical experience generated by the great history"⁷. Military songs add value to the shared (narrated) history of some individuals about themselves or about other individuals, being one of the forms of discourse they have on the war, a discourse turned into folklore, but precisely by this being accessible to the traditional community and having a fundamental role in shaping a collective mentality regarding the war.

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FROM THE beginning, it is essential to distinguish that the spiritual connection with the home space, the emotional load reflected on the place of origin is very strong for the soldier gone to war, even more so as the distance makes him recover from his memory especially the positive features of the place of origin, which acts as a compensating space in relation to that of the front, which is brutalizing, striking in a negative way. However, if soldiers had the possibility to mentally rebuild their own psychological comfort, the world outside the battlefield, appealing to the memories gathered during the years spent in the place of origin, for those remaining home there were limited possibilities to interact with the front, at the imagination level. Since there was no possibility to maintain a satisfactory contact through mail with those gone to war, almost any attempt of those remained home to interact with the front, to temper their questions, fears, and yearning, was impossible. We could suppose, thus, that generating war songs was one of the shy attempts of the home world to shape the ideas and feelings they had about the war, being a way to get closer to those who were gone, the way they related to them in their absence.

The songs performed when joining the army expressed pain and were a creation of the traditional world by which they alluded to the death of those who were gone, who were accompanied to the "railway station, a place that became synonymous to a point of passage to the other world".⁸ These songs, however, equally accompanied the ritual of women passing to "the other world", in the other social space that was created immediately after the men's departure to war and when the women suddenly became the main actors. If in their initial form, the military songs for recruitment were built around the image of the recruit and the painful breakup from home and village, those about going to war are also focused on the characters who, remaining home, establish here a parallel front to that of the war and similar to it, in terms of sufferance: "Plângeți dealuri și colince/ Că pleacă cete voinice/ Plângeți bătrâni și copii/ Că lăsăm locuri pustii/ Inimeni-e-ndurerată/ Că sunt copii fără tată,/ Inima ne este amară/ Că lasă bătrâni

7. Doru Radosav, „Editorial”, *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Orală*, 5, 1 (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2004): 5.

să piară,/ Surori fără frațiori/ Mame fără de feciori,/ Neveste făr-de bărbați/ Fete mari făr-de amânți”⁹ (“*Cry hills and mounds/ That vigorous groups are leaving/ Cry elder and children/ That we leave bare places/ Our heart is in pain/ Because fathers abandon their children / Our heart is bitter/ For leaving the elder to perish, / Sisters without brothers/ Mothers without sons/ Wives without their husbands/ Maidens without lovers*”).

If we consider that these military songs are perceived by the specialists as “belonging, in terms of topic and function, to a more recent layer of folklore; they have been considered as literary category without its own melody, borrowing it from the mourning songs, *doine*, or lament songs”¹⁰, the construction of the military songs following the pattern of the funerary laments does not seem to be senseless. This is because, in the context of the war, we are dealing with a transfer of the men, in a symbolic way, from one world to another, from the world of the living, towards the world of a possible death. The lament, within the funerary ritual, is a form of communication between the living and the dead, to the same extent as the military song is a form of communication between those who remain home and the one who goes to war – an expression of pain. These ritual tags, through the theme they propose, equally function as disjunctive elements, and as conjunctive ones, emphasizing, on the one hand, the rupture between the two worlds, but on the other hand, creating a connection between them.

Equally, the military song, as the burial lament, is a *ritual obligation*: “Communication between the living and the dead is possible only in mediated forms: laments, *alms*, dreams. These interactions underline the hierarchical dynamic relationships between the living and the dead, in which the first must fulfil certain obligations towards the others”¹¹. In the traditional space, as Gail Kligman also shows, it is considered that “it is a sin not to lament the dead; anyone who is buried unlamented is an *athema* to God”¹², the same as any person gone to war and remaining unsung, would be an expression of the home community ignorance.

The military song recomposes the funerary atmosphere, its tone induces the state of sadness and hopelessness, which is found in laments as well. Another similarity to the laments of the funerary ritual is found at the level of the *structural and thematic elements*: the pericope, “which contains a text values as a parable

8. Eugenia Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale asupra primului război mondial* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2004), 173.

9. Gabriel N. Popescu, *Cântece din zile grele și ale cătăniei mele. Istoricul în versuri populare al Batalionului Vânători de Munte, participant la primul război mondial* (Târgoviște: Macarie, 1998), 25.

10. Lucia Iștoc, *Cântecul de cătănie*, 11.

11. Gail Kligman, *Nunta mortului. Ritual, poetică și cultură populară în Transilvania*, Ediția a II-a (Iași: Polirom, 2005), 110.

12. *Ibidem* apud Teodor T. Burada, *Datinile poporului român la înmormântări* (București: Saeculum I.O., 2006), 131.

which generates the funerary discourse"¹³ ("Frunză verde doi bujori, (bis)/ Am un dor și nu mai moru'./ Are maica doi feciori;/ Necăjește până-i crește/ Și-mpăratu-i stăpânește. / Craiovă, țară frumoasă,/ Rămâi, maică, sănătoasă"¹⁴ – "Feedle-dee-dee, two peonies, (bis) / I'm yearning and still not dyin'./ Mother has two young boys;/ Struggles to raise them/ And the emperor reigns over them./ Craiova, beautiful country,/ Farewell, dear mother"), the crying or the lament of the mother („Plângemă maică, cu dor,/ Ț-am fost fată și fecior"¹⁵ – Cry me, mother, yearning/ As I've been your daughter and son), the accompanying on the last route („De Ț-am fost măicuță, drag/ Petrece-mă pân' la prag./ De Ț-am fost măicuță, dulce/ Petrece-mă pân la ușe."¹⁶ – Mother, if you cared about me/ Drive me to the lintel/ If I was ever sweet to you,/ Drive me to the door), the heaven universe or the "relating to nature as a means of emphasizing- through [...] similarity –of certain crisis situation at human level"¹⁷ („Toate și toți plâng cu dor/ Că pe cer e numai nor./ De trei ani aproape-ntr-una/ Nu se potole furtuna;"¹⁸ – All are crying, yearning/ Because the sky is cloudy./ For three years, almost continuously/ The storm is not blowing itself out), meditation on life, articulated by the virtue of worthiness („Că Ț-am fost harnic fecior/ Ț-am arat, Ț-am semănat/ Și de grije Ț-am purtat./ Plânje-mă cu lacrimi multe/ Că nu-Ț mai fac tină-n curte./ Nici nu-Ț mai fac ceartă-n casă/ Nici îmbulzală la masă"¹⁹ – That I was a hard-working boy/ I ploughed, I seeded/ And I cared for you./ Cry me with lots of tears/ Because I'm no longer making mud in your yard./ Nor do I start quarrels in your home/ Or throng at the table), etc. Another interference at the level of literary categories is found in the following version of a military song discovered in Alba County, which perfectly overlaps the pattern of the *Bride's song*: „și Frunză verde, lemn de nuc, mă/ O vint vremea să mă duc./ Cu peană la pălărie,/ Să mă duc în cătănie;/ Să mă duc din satu' neu/ Și zăua bună să-ni ieu;/ De la frunza de pă munți,/ De la bunii nei părinți,/ De la frunza de pă faji,/ Și de la drajii nei frați;/ De la grădina cu flori,/ De la dulcile surori,/ De la hir de busuioc,/ De la feciorii din joc,/ De la frunza de cicoare,/ De la fetele ficioare;/ De la cea de schânteiuță,/ Și de la a me mândruță;/ Floare faină, albineață,/ Ca roua de dimineață./ Rămâneți, tăți, sănătoși,/ Când mă-ntorc, îți hi voioși!"²⁰ (and fiddle-dee-dee, nut-wood,/ It's time for me to leave/ With a feather on my hat,/

13. Doru Radosav, *Sentimentul religios la români. O perspectivă istorică (sec. XVII-XX)* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1997), 172.
14. Z. Dejeu, L. Iștoc, E. H. Drăgan, *Cântecul de cătănie*, 168, Informator: Floare Moșuț, 3 noiembrie 1923, Chelmac, AR.
15. *Ibidem*, 31, informator: Gheorghe Marian, 44 ani, februarie 1966, Miersig, BH.
16. *Ibidem*, 50, informator: Augustin Chicinaș, 58 ani, 5 octombrie 1978, Micești, Cluj.
17. I.R. Fruntelată, *Narațiunile*, 72.
18. G. N. Popescu, *Cântece din zile grele*, 78.
19. Z. Dejeu, L. Iștoc, E. H. Drăgan, *Cântece de cătănie*, 50, informator: Augustin Chicinaș, 58 ani, 5 octombrie 1978, Micești, Cluj.
20. *Ibidem*, 72-73, informator: Nicodim Betei, 60 ani, 1955, Neagra, AB.

To join the army/ Leave my village/ And say goodbye/ From the leaf in the mountains,/ From my dear parents/ From the leaf of the beech tree,/ And my dear brothers/ From the garden full of flowers/ And my sweet sisters/ From the basil flower,/ From the young men at the dance/ From the chicory leaf/ And the young maidens/ From the pimpernel flower,/ And my dear lover/ Beautiful whitish flower,/ As the morning dew/ Farewell all of you/ When I'm back you'll all be happy). We observe similarities in the verses, between the previous military song and the hollers performed in the Romanian villages, within the wedding ritual, when leaving the bride's home. A moment with a great emotional load, her rupture from the creator space, her origin, has sensitized the folklore imaginary world, which emphasizes the moment of departure in a lyrical song, called *The Bride's song*. In the *The Bride's song*, the motive of a presumptive yearning for the previous period in her life prevails. The bride is called to say goodbye to her father, mother, brothers, sisters, young men from the gate, young men from the dance, and so on and so forth: „Ia-ți mireasă ziuă bună,/ De la tată, de la mamă,/ De la frați, de la surori,/ De la grădina cu flori,/ De la fir de lămâiță,/ De la feciori din porțiță,/ De la fir de busuioc,/ De la feciorii din joc./ Rămâi maică sănătoasă,/ Dacă n-ai fost bucuroasă/ Să-mi mai vezi umbra prin casă/ Și ficii pe la fereastră./ Rămâi taică sănătos,/ Dacă n-ai fost bucuros/ Să-mi mai vezi umbra pe jos/ Și feciorii pe la porți”²¹ (*Dear bride say goodbye,/ From father and mother,/ From brothers and sisters/ From the garden full of flowers,/ From the lemon balm,/ From the young men at the gate/ From the basil flower,/ From the young men at the dance,/ Farewell my dear mother,/ If you weren't happy/ To see me around in the house/ And young men at the window,/ Farewell my dear father,/ If you weren't happy,/ To see my shadow on the floor/ And young men at the door*). The traditional mentality includes joining the army, leaving to war, the girl leaving from the family home, in the same metaphor of ritual death, which explains the common symbolic language for all these passages in the life cycle.

We could thus consider that, by feeling the need to tame the brutalizing, frightening, unfair death – correlated with the notion of war which is opened before the men even from the moment of leaving the village – the traditional society gave birth to the military song – as a kind of funerary lament in advance, having the role of appeasing both the sufferance of those remained at home, and the fears of those who are about to leave. The military song is therefore a text with double referentiality, which requires a traditional solemnity, characteristic to the peasantry who cared for each great passage, each journey to another space, though such “*talismán in verse*” (it is the same for the wedding hollers or funerary verses).

21. Cules în anul 2010 de la Maria Șerban, născută în 1935, din satul Ohaba, comuna Șinca Veche, Județul Brașov.

If usually "the terror of death is overcome by the set of gestures and beliefs centred on the eternity of the soul and the Underworld that the priest and the threnodists remind of on the occasion of each death"²², a possible death on the front, away from the possibilities of the loved ones to intervene, can only be tamed in advance, appealing to the imaginative resources of the place of origin, the only one that those remained home can control and represent. We should not omit that for the one gone to war, the possibility of performing the military song – with direct reference to the place of origin – is an act of release, which is extremely beneficial. The military song becomes, as we said, a "talisman in verse", amplified and re-amplified with each performance.

We notice that the war creates this frightening idea of death which does not comfort you precisely because of the distance imposed between you and the loved ones, the lands that you identify yourself. The aspect which is really brutalizing, perceived by the world of the Romanian village, is the injustice of a death without a candle near the head, without anyone to keep vigil for your passage. This aspect is often presented in the military songs, as for example: „Foaie verde grâu frumos, Mamă dragă/ Rămâi Ardeal sănătos (bis) Mamă dragă/ Când răsare mândru soare,/ Plinu-i ceriu de cocoare./ Dar acelea nu-s cocoare,/ Alea sunt aeroplane,/ Aeroplane nemțești/ Care vin la Mărășești;/ Alea nu vin să ne vadă/ Alea vin ca să ne piardă,/ Cu gaze otrăvitoare./ Colo sus la negru munte/ Un' să bat luptele crunte./ Cade unu, cade doi,/ Cade patruzeci și doi;/ Cade unu pe-o cărare/ Și mi-l vede-o fată mare,/ Și-iaprinde-o lumânare./ Strigă neamțu din cărare:/ -Stinge fată lumina/ Să nu-ți sting eu viața,/ C-așa-i la cătană dată,/ Să moară neluminată”²³ (*Fiddle-dee-dee, beautiful wheat, Dear mother/ Farewell dear Ardeal (bis) Dear mother/ When the beautiful sun comes up/ The sky is full of crane birds./ But they are not crane birds./ Those are aeroplanes,/ German aeroplanes / Coming to Mărășești;/ They are not coming to see us / They are coming to destroy us,/ With poisoning gas./ Up there in the mountains / Heavy battles take place./ One is down, two are down,/ Forty two are on the ground;/ One is falling on a path/ And a maiden sees him,/ Lights a candle for him./ But the German shouts at her:/ - Hey, girl, blow out the candle light/ Before I take your life,/ 'Cause this is the fate of a soldier,/ To die without a candle*).

The departure to war is not perceived in the village community as an individual drama, but as an experience lived collectively, with deep implications; the references to the "world at home" implicate the category of women (in the four states: beloved one, wife, mother, sister), of children and elderly – presented, most of the times, as an appendix to the women's image: "Jalea a cuprins pe toți/ Pe bătrâni și

22. E. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 158.

23. Z. Dejeu, L. Iștoc, E. H. Drăgan, *Cântece de cătănie*, 95, informator: Ana Sârbu, 67 ani, 1961, Mateiaș, BV.

pe nepoți,/ Pe fecioare și femei,/ Pe copii, sărmani de ei!/ Pe săraci și bogați/
C-au rămas mulți, fără frați”²⁴ (*Sadness has embraced all/ The elder and the nephews,/ Maidens and women,/ And the poor children!/ The poor and the rich/ ‘Cause many remained without their brothers*) or “Ochiul prinde și privește,/ Spre locul ce părăsește, / Privește întunecat/ Spre locul de-unde-am plecat, / Că acolo-am lăsat/ Mândruliță fără amant,/ Soră fără frățior, / Părinte fără fecior”²⁵ (*The eye catches and looks,/ To the place it leaves, / Looks darkly / To the place that I’ve left, / ‘Cause there I abandoned / A beloved one, without her lover,/ A sister without her brother, / A parent without his son*). The sequence of human values remaining home is, in essence, a summary of the yearnings that the soldier takes to war with him. This type of military song is introductory, it seems an initiation to the universe of the sufferance felt by the departed individual. “Sunt ogoare nelucrate/ Holde nesămănată/ Case pustii, dărâmate, / Ca vai de lume sunt toate./ Codru-I trist și veștejit/ Bucuriile-au pierit./ [...] Toată lumea, toată plânge,/ Omenire-noată-n sânge,/ Par-un duh rău a venit/ Oamenii au săracit/ Copiii plâng după tați/ Fetele după amănți,/ Nevestele după bărbați/ Surioarele de frați”²⁶ (*There are unworked lands / Unseeded crop fields/ Empty, wrecked houses, / And woe betide the world./ The woods are sad and withered/ The joys have disappeared./ [...] Everybody cries,/ The whole world is in blood,/ Seems that an evil spirit came/ People have become poor/ Children cry for their fathers/ Girls for their lovers,/ Wives for their husbands/ Sisters for the brothers*).

The military songs emphasize, most often, the victim state. Acknowledgement, acceptance or actual verbalization of the victim state is built especially by relating to the “mother”, the element towards which the soldiers’ fears, pains and helplessness converge: (1) “Fire-ai, maică, supărată, (bis)/ De ce nu m-ai făcut fată?/ De ce m-ai făcut fecioru’/ Să fiu la neamț de-ajutoriu”²⁷ (*May oube upset, mother, (bis)/ Why was I not born a girl?/ Why was I born a man / So that I be helpful for the German*). (2) “Foaie verde de pe baltă,/ Fire-ai maică, blestemată,/ De ce nu m-ai făcut fată?/ Mamă, mamă, blestemată/ De ce nu m-ai făcut fată?/ Să șed cu tine pe vetră/ Să nu bat țara de lată:/ Să trag câte-un fir de furcă/ Să nu bat țara ce-i lungă/ M-ai făcut fecior voinic,/ Țeava la tun s-o ridic/ Țeava tunului îi grea,/ Mi se rupe inima./ În cea seară-i săptămâna/ De când mi-au rupt nemții mâna/ Rana-n mână, rană-n piept/ Rană la picioru’ drept/ Hai măicuță de mă leagă/ C-un fir de mătăsă neagră/ Dar ma leagă-ncetișor/ Căci rănile rău mă dor”²⁸ (*Fiddle-dee-dee on the pond,/ Curse on you, mother,/ Why was I not born a girl?/ Mother, mother, curse on you/ Why was I not born a girl?/ To sit with you near*

24. G. N. Popescu, *Cântece din zile grele*, 24.

25. *Ibidem*, 14.

26. *Ibidem*, 78.

27. *Ibidem*, 124, informator: necunoscut, iunie 1909, Lelești, BH.

28. *Ibidem*, 44, informator: Ica Olteanu, 21 ani, 25 octombrie 1953, Fizeșu Gherlii, Cluj)

the fireplace/ Not to wander across the country:/ To pull a strand on the distaff/ Not to wander around the country/ You made me a strong man,/ So that I lift the cone of the cannon up/ The cannon cone is heavy,/ My heart is broken./ It's been a week this evening/ That the Germans broke my arm/ Wound in my arm, wound in my heart/ Wound in my right leg/ Come, mother, wrap a bandage/ With a strand of black silk/ But wrap me slowly/ 'Cause my wounds hurt badly).

Besides, the comparisons made between barracks and the home space are extremely frequent, by idealizing the place of origin and emphasizing certain features that are profoundly attenuated: "Dar în cazarmă ce vezi?/ Nici nu-ți vine să crezi/ Aici, nu e ca acasă,/ O cămăruță frumoasă/ Și n-ai să vezi pe pereți,/ Șervete cu râuri verzi/ Și velințe-npodobite/ De mâini meștere gătite./ Nu-s cuiere încărcate/ Cu haine ne-mbrăcate/ Pe paturi nu sunt saltele,/ Cearceafuri cu ajurele/ Ci sunt numai scândurele,/ Dar n-am voie ca să zic/ Că e salon de calic,/ Când trăim zile amare,/ Mofturile n-au cătare"²⁹ (*But what do you see in the barracks?/ You cannot believe/ This is not like home,/ A nice little room/ And you won't see on the walls,/ Huckbacks with green rivers/ And decorated blankets/ Made by gifted hands./ There's no hanger full/ Of clothes that aren't worn / No mattresses on the beds,/ No embroidered sheets/ There's only wooden boards,/ But I'm not allowed to tell/ That it's room for the poor,/ When we live through difficult days,/ There's no place for whims*). We observe an abundance of rhetorical figures, and, in the foreground, we identify enumeration and repetition. The enumeration accumulates psychological tension, describing the lacks and the precarious life style imposed by the war, while repetitions occur especially through verbs. Again, we identify the reference to the *mother*, but this time, an indirect reference. Remembering his home, the soldier associates his mother's image to the huckbacks on the walls, the blankets, clothes and bed sheets.

In essence, any war experience becomes an experience lived by the individual not only in relation to his brothers in arms, or, on the contrary, to his enemies, but also in relation to his loved ones at home, with whom the soldier mainly identifies. Thus, the war is not fought only at material level, but is always accompanied by an abstract level—made at the border between imagination, emotion, love for home, etc.: "Tată, mamă, când te uiți/ Te trec sudorile fierbinți, / Că se dă luptă turbată/ Curge sânge, curge baltă/ Se bat de te-ngrozești/ Leii-n câmp la Mărășești"³⁰ (*Father, mother, when you look / You feel the warm sweat, / 'Cause there's a mad battle / Blood sheds, a pool of blood/ Their fight horrifies you/ As lions in the field of Mărășești*). Thus, we can consider that these formulations ("father", "mother") also have the role of affectively marking the discourse, but they also represent a constant presence, even obsessive, in the mind of the soldier, this necessity of

29. *Ibidem*, 16.

30. *Ibidem*, 59.

sharing the horrors of the war with them, demonstrating the redemptive characteristics attributed to the dear ones, left at home.

Moreover, it is interesting to observe the evolution of the love relationships in times of war. There are multiple levels that we can focus on:

a. the supposition of the unmarried soldiers that forgetfulness has replaced them in the hearts of their lovers left at home: “De la București la vale, (bis)/ Merge-un căpitan călare, (bis) măi,/ Căpitanu’ şuierând,/ Militarii toți plângând, măi/ –Ce plângeți voi militari,/ Or vi-i dor de fete mari?/ – Nu ni-i dor de fete mari,/ Că fetile ne-o uitat,/ Din sara care-am plecat, măi/ Noi le-am dat pahar cu vin,/ Le-am făcut voia deplin;/ Și le-am dat pahar cu lapte, măi,/ Le-am făcut voia la toate”³¹ (*From Bucharest downwards, (bis)/ A captain rides a horse, (bis) hey,/ The captain is hissing,/ All the soldiers are crying, hey/ – Why are you crying, soldiers,/ Do you miss the maidens?/ – We don’t miss the maidens,/ ‘Cause they have forgotten us,/ The night we left, hey/ We gave them a glass of wine,/ And fulfilled all their wishes;/ We gave them a glass of milk, hey,/ We fulfilled everyone’s wishes*). The same reason, of forgetfulness, doubled by a metaphorical expression specific to the traditional rural universe, used to indicate the rupture produced by their departure is also found in: “Eu mă duc, mândră, mă duc, mă,/ La armată, nu la plug mă;/ Eu mă duc, mândră, de-acasă,/ La armată, nu la coasă;/ Eu mă duc, mândră, mă duc,/ Pă urma mea crește nuc;/ Crește nuc îngreunat,/ Rămai mândră cu banat.”³² (*My dear, I’m leaving, I’m leaving, hey,/ Joining the army, not ploughing the land, hey;/ My dear, I’m leaving, I’m leaving my home,/ Joining the army, not cutting the grass;/ My dear, I’m leaving, I’m leaving,/ Behind me a nut tree is growing;/ A heavy nut tree,/ Remain my dear with sadness*). In the rural imagination, the nut tree is the king of the trees, but adding the epithet “heavy”, it becomes a symbol of pressure, of pent-up and heavy forgetfulness that grows after one leaves. It is one of the metaphors with the greatest expressivity that the rural universe has created.

b. The advice of the soldiers to their loved ones to find partners that are “younger and nobler”. This piece of advice works both predictively (soldiers expect that their lovers find other partners during the period of the war), and as a reproach, but is, mostly a masked reproach, slightly attenuated: “Foaie verde arțârășu,/ -Unde-ai plecat, băiețăș? mă/ –Eu mă duc, mândro, la Iași,/ Că m-a scris militărăș./ –Dar pe mine cui mă Iași,/ Pe mâna la doi vrăjmași?/ –De tine, puică, e bine,/ Că rămâi în sat la tine./ Și mai sunt voinici ca mine,/ Mai tineri și mai în fire./ Dar este mai rău de mine,/ Că plec în țară străină,/ Fără dor și fără milă./ –Fie voinici cât de mulți,/ Dacă nu e cin’ s-a dus.../ Fie voinicii ca iarba,/ Toate, neică, sunt degeaba,/ Dacă nu ești dumneata,/ Toate, neică- s degeaba”³³ (*Fiddle-dee-dee, little maple*

31. Z. Dejeu, L. Iștoc, E. H. Drăgan, *Cântece de cătănie*, 48, informator: Raveca Rus, 73 ani, 16 aprilie 2011, Spermezeu, BN.

32. *Ibidem*, 31, informator: Gheorghe Marian, 44 ani, februarie 1966, Miersig, BH.

33. *Ibidem*, 46, informator: Radu Țărloiu, 86 ani, 1976, Mogoșești, OT.

tree,/ - Where have you gone little boy? hey/ -I'm going to Iași, my dear,/ Cause I'm enrolled as a soldier./ -And who are you leaving me to,/ Turned over to the enemies?/ - It is good for you, my baby,/ 'Cause you're staying in your village./ And there are other strong men like me,/ Younger and nobler./ But it's worse for me,/ 'Cause I'm going to a foreign country,/ Without love, and without mercy./ -If there are many strong men,/ It doesn't matter if it's not you.../ If they are as many as the blades of grass,/ It is all in vain, my dear,/ If it's not you,/ It is all in vain, my dear).

The image of the women who, remained without their life partners, look for comfort in other places – practices that falls into marital infidelity: “De unde cătana pleacă,/ Dor, doruțule (bis),/ Rămâne casa săracă/ Și nevasta supărată./ Mândra mea cea de demult/ A cerut gură-mprumut;/ Și-a trimis sluga la noi,/ Să-i trimit eu buze moi./ Dară eu n-am bolânzit,/ Să trimit buzele-n vânt./ Cui e voia să iubească/ Vină singur să vorbească/ Și poștă să nu plătească”³⁴ (As the soldier leaves,/ My dear, dear (bis),/ The home is empty/ And the wife is upset./ My old-time beloved one / Has asked for mouth loan;/ And sent her servant to us,/ So that I send her new lips./ But I'm not crazy,/ To send my lips in the wind./ Who wants to love/ Should come and speak for himself/ And not pay for the mail).

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OUR ANALYSIS can be expanded with other interpretations as well. We shall stop, for the moment, at drafting the above, in an attempt to bring forward a few testimonies about the experience of the war, as they were preserved in the folklore “archive” of the Romanian people. If “for the man of oral traditional culture, the war exists as cultural experience, before being an individual experience”³⁵, we consider that the immixture of today’s researcher into the traditional collection is essential to reveal a certain type of representation and understanding of the world and representations that the world enclosed in those days.

Seen as a cultural symbol, the war is enriched by the multiple characteristics and connotations that the military song assigns to it, by the abundance of rhetorical figures and the set of motifs found in the texts. This is precisely why, the attempt to organize as many systems of understanding the war, from the point of view of the Romanian peasant, seems to us worthy of being considered and enriched through extended researches, because it presents a unique vision, specific to our culture, a vision about the war that is worthy of being discussed, understood, perpetuated.

34. *Ibidem*, 96, informator: Lena Antănaș, 17 noiembrie 1921, Făget, TM.

35. I. R. Frunteletă, *Narațiunile*, 38.

WWI AND THE RADICALIZATION OF NATIONALISM

The Case of the Transylvanian Pedagogist Onisifor Ghibu



STEFANO SANTORO

Abstract

This article studies the evolution of the Romanian Transylvanian nationalism from the beginning of the 20th century to the years following WWI, through the thought and the action of a protagonist of that experience, the pedagogist Onisifor Ghibu. Deeply affected by the Mitteleuropean thought, Ghibu had developed a peculiar pedagogical-philosophical synthesis, which postulated the militant mission of teachers, whose goal should be the creation of a strong national consciousness in their students. Based on these concepts, Ghibu was actively engaged in facing what he considered to be a project of denationalization carried out by the Hungarian government against Romanians. The war and the union of Transylvania with Romania entailed a radicalization of the Romanian Transylvanian nationalism: the cultural rights Ghibu had invoked before the war for the Romanian nation were then denied to the ethnic minorities, just included in the new boundaries.

Keywords

Nationalism, Romania, Transylvania, Austro-Hungarian Empire, pedagogy.

THE STORY of Onisifor Ghibu allows one to throw light on the dynamics characterizing not only Eastern European nationalism, but also European nationalism in general, in the transition between the 19th and the 20th centuries. Ghibu represents the ideal type of the radical nationalist in the regions of the Austro-Hungarian border, voted in the years of his youth to a cause deemed holy, that is the defence of the Romanian rights from the oppression and the denationalization pursued by the Hungarian dominant ethnicity. The ideal trajectory of Ghibu offers to scholars an interesting case study on the evolution of border nationalisms coinciding with the Empire crisis and the subsequent formation of the new national states, born on its ashes. The case of Transylvanian nationalism seems to reflect Ernest Gellner's model, whereby a mythical Ruritania, populated mostly by peasants, in whose womb however a national movement begins to develop, led by the emerging national elites, finally asserts its independence from the Empire of Megalomania which it had belonged to¹.

Ghibu was born in 1883 in Săliște, near Sibiu, in an area marked by a historical German presence. The maturation and the years of study spent in contact with the three cultures, Romanian, Hungarian and German, introduced Ghibu to the Central European world, which would powerfully influence him at university and later. As early as in the years of high school Ghibu began to bind to some comrades who would be, like him, leading figures of the Romanian national movement in Transylvania: among them, the poet Octavian Goga was certainly the most important. At the turn of the century Goga became the leader of an uncompromising nationalist current fiercely polemic against the ruling class of the Romanian National Party of Transylvania (PNR)². As an animator of political and literary magazines like *Luceafărul* and *Țara Noastră*, Goga, whom Ghibu considered "the most perfect expression of a national fighter"³, gathered around him most of the young generation of the Transylvanian Romanian intellectuals, anxious to commit themselves to the Romanian nation oppressed by Budapest's denationalization policies. They were the so called "tineri oțeliți" (steely youth), which Ghibu belonged to: precisely on *Luceafărul*, Goga would exalt the idea of the militant mission of intellectuals who had the duty to fight to defend their nation. According to Goga, "a fighting literature" was needed, since "in Transylvania a writer [was] fatally a fighter"⁴.

1. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).
2. Keith Hitchins, *Conștiința națională și acțiune politică la românii din Transilvania (1868-1918)* (Cluj: Editura Dacia, 1992), vol. II, 98-116; Hitchins, *A Nation Affirmed: the Romanian National Movement in Transylvania 1860/1914* (Bucharest: The Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1999); Vlad Popovici, *Tribunismul (1884-1905)* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2008); Teodor V. Păcățian, *Cartea de aur sau luptele politice-naționale ale Românilor de sub coroana ungară* (Sibiu, 1915), vol. VIII, 169-172.
3. Onisifor Ghibu, *Amintirile unui pedagog militant*, Ed. Mihai O. Ghibu (București: Editura Institutului Cultural Român, 2004), 301.
4. "Însemnări," *Luceafărul* 13 (1914), n. 6.

After the conclusion of his period of higher education studies at the Theological Institute of Sibiu, in 1905 Ghibu moved to Bucharest, where he gathered the circles of pan-Romanian nationalism. Right from the years of his theological studies in Transylvania, Ghibu was immersed in the climate of pan-Romanian nationalism, and the magazine *Sămănătorul* was the most spread among students, being considered in Transylvania “as the authentic voice of the whole nation”⁵. Around *Sămănătorul* and its leader, the historian Nicolae Iorga, revolved the representatives of the young Transylvanian nationalist generation, including Ghibu and Goga. They belonged to a traditionalist trend born in the second half of the 19th century, in the climate of the late-romantic post-1848, characterized by a refusal of the parliamentary and liberal legacy of the Enlightenment and of the French rationalism, to which they opposed the exaltation of an organic society on an agrarian basis⁶.

Within this context, Ghibu operated during his stay in Bucharest, deepening the knowledge of the German idealist philosophy of Schopenhauer and above all of Fichte and his spiritual conception of the nation. As Ghibu stated, by reading and meditating Fichte he discovered “a new and fascinating horizon”⁷. As Fichte, who with his *Addresses to the German Nation* had placed “the cornerstone of the German renaissance, in a time when the weak-minded believed that the disaster of Jena meant *finis Germaniae*”, Ghibu had also chosen to resist to the Magyar oppression over his nation⁸. In those years, Ghibu specialized in pedagogy, which he considered a “militant” discipline, useful to create a “national consciousness” among the youngest generations⁹. Between 1906 and 1907 at the University of Budapest, Ghibu assiduously frequented the group of the Romanian students in the Hungarian capital and the “Petru Maior” circle, around which they gathered, entering, in January 1907, in the editorial board of the newspaper *Lupta*, the body of the Romanian nationalist parliamentary group. The polemic target of his articles was primarily the discriminatory educational system, which the Romanians of Transylvania were subjected to, imposed through a series of laws enacted since the last two decades of the 19th century and culminated in the

5. Onisifor Ghibu, *Pe baricadele vieții. Anii mei de învățătură*, Ed. Nadia Nicolescu (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1981), 102-103.
6. K. Hitchins, *România 1866-1947* (București: Humanitas, 2004), 261-264; Nicolae Bocșan, *Mihai Eminescu. Concepția despre națiune*, in *Cultură și societate în epoca modernă*, Ed. Nicolae Bocșan, Nicolae Edroiu and Aurel Răduțiu (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1990), 145-156; Marta Petreu, *De la Junimea la Noica. Studii de cultură românească* (Iași: Polirom, 2011), 27-65; Zigu Ornea, “Caracterul reacționar și diversionist al sămănătorismului,” *Cercetari Filozofice* 1961, 1.
7. Traian Vedinaș, *Onisifor Ghibu. Educator și memorialist* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1983), 18.
8. Ghibu, *Pe baricadele vieții. Anii mei de învățătură*, 177.
9. “In any case, I have always been a militant pedagogue at the service of the national concept of pedagogy”: Ghibu, *Amintirile unui pedagog militant*, 302.

“Apponyi law” of 1907, after the name of the minister of Education and Religious Affairs, count Albert Apponyi. This measure aimed at penalizing the Romanian denominational primary schools, run by the Greek-Catholic and Orthodox Churches, for the benefit of the state schools in the Hungarian language, through a complex regulatory system based on a series of requirements (such as a minimum teacher salary), often very difficult to meet. In addition, the Apponyi law meticulously addressed the contents of the different disciplines, ensuring to give them a Hungarian national character and, at the same time, preventing any teaching aiming to strengthen alternative national sentiments. Therefore, every teacher would have to “strengthen in the children’s souls the attachment to the Hungarian homeland and the awareness of belonging to the Hungarian nation”¹⁰.

To this assimilationist program, Ghibu opposed the need to strengthen the feeling of national belonging of the young generation and its national pride. To this end, he identified what it believed to represent the pillars of the national resistance, namely the two Romanian Churches, the only possible financial sponsors and administrators of minority language schools. A moral obligation of the Romanians of Transylvania should be to finance the Romanian denominational schools, which, otherwise, would have to close under the Apponyi law. According to Ghibu the Romanians should overcome the sectarian divisions between Greek-Catholics and Orthodox, which dated back to the late 17th century, in the name of the common “Romanianism”: the difference of dogmatic nature was in effect “so thin”, while the primary mission was to defend the Romanian character of Transylvania¹¹. Ghibu also thought that the universal suffrage was the main instrument to weaken the Hungarian power bloc, made up of an alliance between urban bourgeoisie and feudal nobility. The Romanian peasants in effect could not vote because of their census: the adoption of universal suffrage and the fight against illiteracy would allow, through an adequate political education of the Romanian people, a reversal of the consolidated power situation at the parliament of Budapest¹².

In Ghibu’s vision in those years the nationalistic and the Enlightenment’s ideals joined, attributing to intellectuals the duty to lift the people from their ancestral state of ignorance and awe. However, the nationalism of Ghibu was deterministic and naturalistic, not civic, in accordance with the dominant thought, of Junimist derivation. Simply, democracy and constitutionalism were the only instruments that the Romanian elite could use to weigh down the overwhelming number of potential Romanian voters in Transylvania and to defend the prerogative of the Romanian elite in organizing them. Through the press and publications, the

10. Sándor Biró, *The Nationalities Problem in Transylvania 1867-1940. A social history of the Romanian minority under Hungarian rule, 1867-1918 and of the Hungarian minority under Romanian rule, 1918-1940* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 218.

11. “Ce e de făcut cu școala?” *Lupta* (13/26 May – 20 May/2 June 1907).

12. “La luptă!” *Lupta* (12/25 maggio 1907).

Romanian political, intellectual and ecclesiastical elites would have to awaken and feed the national sentiment in the Romanian people¹³. Ghibu's ideas were widely shared in the broader panorama of nationalist radicalism: universal suffrage, freedom of expression, land reform were the classic demands of much of the nationalist leadership. Ghibu and Goga's group put a special emphasis on the national community understood in an organicist and transcendent meaning and on the denial of any possible compromise with the Hungarian authorities. In addition, they openly polemicised with the Transylvanian Romanian political and religious establishment, judged too accommodating with the Hungarians, corrupt or prey of politicking¹⁴. According to Ghibu, during and after the approval of the Apponyi law, the Romanian deputies in Budapest had chosen to "adapt' to the new situation", leaving the fate of the schools in the hands of the Churches, which in turn were "without almost any organization to be able to conduct a fight with some chance of victory, without hope, without a battle plan, without a skilled guide and without money"¹⁵.

During his Budapest stay, Ghibu developed a thought of "national-social authentic democracy", characterized by multiple political and cultural influences, which were part of a populist conservative idea of "Christian socialism" widespread at that time in Central Europe¹⁶. The Transylvanian intellectuals received this corpus of ideas both through the mediation of the Junimism and the Sămănătorism, and through the contacts that many members of the Transylvanian nationalism had with Vienna's anti-Magyar circles, headed by Karl Lueger's Christian Social Party. The latter cleverly blended socialistic populism, "anti-system" demagoguery, anti-Semitism and corporate ideals of an "organic state"¹⁷. If the appeal of corporate-inspired Christian Socialism was strong to the Romanian nationalists, the collaboration with the Hungarian socialists on the contrary had proved to be impossible because – in Ghibu's opinion – they were not really internationalists, but rather interested in the preservation of the lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen¹⁸.

13. See Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780. Programme, myth, reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger, eds. *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993); Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans," *European History Quarterly* 1989, 2.

14. "Politica noastră școlară," *Tribuna* (20 August/2 September 1909).

15. Ghibu, *Pe baricadele vieții. Anii mei de învățătură*, 177.

16. Paula Braga, *Dilemele lui Onisifor Ghibu*, introduction by Ion Gh. Stanciu (București: Editura Semne, 2000), 142-150.

17. Stefano Santoro, *Dall'Impero asburgico alla Grande Romania. Il nazionalismo romeno di Transilvania fra Ottocento e Novecento* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2014), 47-51.

18. Robert A. Kann, *The Multinational Empire. Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy 1848-1918* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), vol. II, *Empire Reform*, 155.

In 1907, Ghibu managed to obtain, with Iorga's support, a scholarship of the League for the cultural unity of all Romanians for the University of Strasbourg, by then included in a French majority enclave within the German territory. During his stay in the Alsatian capital, Ghibu studied the relationships between dominant and oppressed nations, through the analogy between that scenario and the situation in his native region. In Alsace there was a "Germanization" against the French population, as in Transylvania there was a "Magyarization" against the Romanian population. In both cases – Ghibu affirmed – the dominant ethnic group wanted to erase gradually the minority national consciousness through forced assimilation. In 1908, Ghibu moved to Jena for a doctorate in pedagogy under the guidance of Wilhelm Rein, a member of the Herbartian school, developing the observations made in Alsace and critically analyzing the "bilingualism", considered an instrument used by the rulers in order to introduce artificially a foreign language among a subordinate population¹⁹.

In his doctoral thesis, discussed in 1909, Ghibu focused on "modern bilingualism". He asserted that the state was not "the end", but only an "instrument" to secure "happiness on the hearth" and therefore, "it had no right to restrict citizens' freedom", but was "obligated to do everything in its power for the development of their natural talent". A state, which imposes bilingualism from primary school, would commit a real "educational monstrosity" and schools conceived in such a way would constitute "schools of degeneration, demoralization and dehumanization"²⁰. The phenomenon of bilingualism, Ghibu stated, did not only occur in Hungary but also in many other nations, including Germany, Russia, Serbia, and North America, and affected "both pedagogy and politics". Therefore, Ghibu aimed at developing a scientifically designed study to criticize the Apponyi law and the Hungarian educational policy, based not on propaganda but on "educational and legal grounds"²¹. If bilingualism could be accepted, within certain limits, "in larger states, with an advanced culture", it could not be accepted in a small country like Hungary, where the Hungarian population amounted to less than half of the total population. Hungary's minority nationalities then considered the Hungarian culture as a "substitute" which they did not need, feeling for the Hungarian language not "even the slightest attraction"²². Ghibu opposed to this anti-democratic policy the function of "national pedagogy", the last bastion for the defence of the cultural identity and national minority²³.

19. Onisifor Ghibu, "În contra utracvismului," in Ghibu, *Nu din partea aceea. Studii și articole 1904-1914*, Ed. Vasile Popeangă, afterword by Nadia Nicolescu (București: Editura Eminescu, 1985), 334.

20. Braga, *Dilemele lui Onisifor Ghibu*, 45-47.

21. Ghibu, *Pe baricadele vieții. Anii mei de învățătură*, 245-246.

22. *Ibidem*, 247.

23. *Ibidem*, 49.

Back home from Jena and known for his pedagogical ideas and for his intransigent nationalism, Ghibu was appointed school inspector for the Orthodox Archdiocese of Transylvania, with the support of his friend Goga, now an influential intellectual. As a school inspector, from 1910 to 1914, Ghibu had a purely political aim, namely to preserve the prerogatives of the Romanian denominational schools, despite the provisions of the Apponyi law: aim that proved impossible to achieve. Even if he could not avoid the closure of denominational schools affected by the Hungarian law, Ghibu however intensified his efforts to improve the preparation of teachers and to make them propagators of the Romanian national ideal among the youngest generations. As a secretary of the school section of the cultural society *Astra* from 1912 to 1914, Ghibu thought that the collaboration between the teachers of both Romanian denominational schools under the banner of the Romanian nation could be the main instrument to fight the "Magyarization". Moreover, he dedicated himself to the organization of congresses of education in the Romanian territories under foreign domination, both in Transylvania and in Bukovina²⁴.

The outbreak of WWI in July 1914 led many Romanian nationalist intellectuals from Transylvania to desert the call to arms by the Habsburg army and to go to Romania, where they created a powerful movement of irredentist opinion, joining the group of exiles from the previous years and the interventionists active in the capital. Romania was in a situation very similar to Italy's, because both countries were allies of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, but had to deal with nationalist and irredentist movements that demanded the union of territories subject to the Habsburgs. Moreover, both Rome and Bucharest chose not to decide, initially opting for neutrality and trying to evaluate the most appropriate moves depending on the turn that would take the military fortunes of the contenders, haggling on the one hand with the Entente powers and on the other with the Triple Alliance on possible compensatory measures in case of neutrality. Italy and Romania signed a secret agreement on consultation and cooperation on 23 September 1914, through which they agreed upon joint actions and exchange of information in the event of an abandonment of neutrality. On 6 February 1915, the agreement was further supplemented by a secret treaty of mutual assistance, which provided for mutual military support in the event of an Austro-Hungarian attack²⁵. Romania's Conservative Party, traditionally linked to the Austro-German world, had attempted until the last moment to keep Romania in the field of the Central Powers. In the spring of 1916, the Conservative leader Alexandru Marghiloman offered to Vienna's government, through the mediation of the Austro-Hungarian Minister in Bucharest Ottokar Czernin, Romania's participation in the war on the side of

24. Ibidem, 261, 293-294.

25. Glenn E. Torrey, "The Rumanian-Italian Agreement of 23 September 1914," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 1966: 103.

the Triple Alliance, in exchange for a series of territorial concessions in Bukovina and of some guarantees on the rights of Romanians in Transylvania.

Despite the willingness shown by Vienna and Berlin, the Hungarian government was inflexible on that issue, pushing Romania on the side of the Entente, despite the well-rooted anti-Russian and anti-panslavic prejudices, widespread in all sectors of the Romanian ruling class. Having signed on 17 August 1916 a military agreement with the Entente, which had guaranteed the self-determination for the Romanians of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of the war, ten days later the Romanian government declared war on the latter. In the early months of the war, the Romanian army launched an offensive towards the north-west, which brought about a rapid penetration into the Hungarian territory and led to the occupation of a part of Transylvania. A joint Austro-German offensive from the north and a Bulgarian-German offensive from the south, forced the Romanian army to retreat to Moldova, where it could rely on the Russian protection. Apart from the eastern regions, where both the government and the court withdrew, the rest of Romania was occupied by the German army, which conquered Bucharest on 6 December 1916²⁶.

In the fall of 1914, Ghibu was called by the Hungarian army to be sent to the Russian front alongside with other Romanian intellectuals, but he was able to desert and repair in Bucharest. In the Romanian capital, the nationalist circles were in unrest. As Ghibu wrote, to them “the situation seemed clearer than the sun light”, because the Romanian people should assert its will not only “in the framework of the Romanian political boundary established until then, but within its ethnic borders”. Pan-Romanian ethnicist ideals were intertwined with democratic self-determination ideals, and both characterized the speech of Ghibu and of the other Transylvanian nationalists²⁷.

In Bucharest, where he arrived in November 1914, Ghibu gathered the circles of radical nationalism headed by Iorga's League for the cultural unity of all Romanians, founding together with Goga the association *Acțiunea Națională*, and was involved even more in the campaign for the entry of Romania into the war alongside the Entente. A joint declaration of Goga and Ghibu in the *Tribuna* journal, where they openly called for the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire based on a policy of national self-determination, caused their death sentence in absentia for treason by the military court in Cluj²⁸. The Transylvanian exiles tightened relationships with the interventionist pro-Entente wing of the Conservative Party, especially with Nicolae Filipescu, who reserved a special column entitled “Ardealul vorbeste” in the *Epoca* newspaper. In December 1914,

26. Hitchins, *România 1866-1947*, 293-316.

27. Ghibu, *Amintirile unui pedagog militant*, 118.

28. Teodor Gal, *Onisifor Ghibu. Pedagog și educator național-militant* (Cluj: Napoca Star, 2002), 119.

with Ghibu's mediation, the central committee of the League for the cultural unity was renewed, relaunching its activities with a series of lectures throughout the country, with the participation of eminent personalities from politics and culture, including the conservative interventionist Filipescu and Take Ionescu, along with Ghibu and Goga. In December 1914, the Transylvanian writer Gheorghe Bogdan-Duică, as secretary general of the League, which had changed its name into the League for the political unity of all Romanians, asserted that the target of the League was "the conquest of the Territory now inhabited by our brothers in Transylvania"²⁹.

On Romania's entry into the war, in August 1916, the Transylvanian exiles in Bucharest enlisted as volunteers in the Romanian army to be sent to the northern front. However, the rapid military collapse of the country and its occupation pushed the Transylvanians, including Ghibu and Goga, to take refuge in Iași, the capital of Moldova, in the wake of the government and the court³⁰. Transylvanian exiles then began to consider the idea of spending their nationalist background for the cause of the Romanian nationalism in Bessarabia. In this region, under Russian rule since 1812, a new-born Romanian (Moldavian) national movement led by Vasile Stroescu operated. The Moldavian national movement, however, was very weak, largely because of the established Russian presence on the territory and the cultural penetration of the Russian language even among those referring to their Romanian roots. The Romanian Transylvanian nationalists wanted then to support the nationalists active across the border, in order to route the local national movement in the same direction of the well-established PNR.

In December 1916, Ghibu went to Chișinău. During this journey, an ancestral fear pervaded him: the "immense Russia seemed somehow synonymous with Siberia"³¹. Ghibu and Goga then split until the end of the war. The former was fully involved in building a national movement in Bessarabia, the latter was absorbed by the political propaganda organized by the Romanian government at home and abroad, being also a member of the governmental and unofficial delegations in Paris to liaise with the allies³².

In March 1917, Ghibu returned to Chișinău, this time with more precise ideas, aiming at giving logistical and strategic support to the nascent Romanian national movement in Bessarabia. It was not an easy task, because in Petrograd the republic had just been proclaimed and in Bessarabia the situation was quite confusing. The majority of the population, consisting of peasants, tended to sympathize

29. Vasile Netea, *Viața și opera lui Gheorghe Bogdan-Duică* (București: Editura "Cartea Românească", 1940), 13-14; Gheorghe Bogdan-Duică, *Politica Ligei Culturale* (București, 1914), 3, 55-57.

30. Ghibu, *Amintirile unui pedagog militant*, 150.

31. Onisifor Ghibu, *Octavian Goga: prietenie și luptă de o viață – Amintiri* –, Ed. Mihai O. Ghibu (București: Editura Semne, 2010), 65.

32. *Ibidem*, 66.

with the revolutionary turn of the events, hoping to benefit from the expropriation of the boyar nobility and coveting the land reform. The Romanian nationalists knew that the concerns of the population were about the social question, and that the peasants were not very sensitive to the slogans of the greater Romanian nationalism. In addition, even those who referred to pan-Romanianism, that is very limited groups of intellectuals, especially teachers, often showed an ignorance of the Latin alphabet or even a poor knowledge of the Romanian language itself, speaking Russian more fluently.

Ghibu returned several times to his experience of Transylvanian nationalist lent to the national cause in Bessarabia during the war through his writings³³. An element that Ghibu perceived since his first contact with Bessarabia was the lack of pan-Romanian feelings both among the people and among the elite of that region. The beginning of the war, which was perceived in Transylvania as something involving the whole Romanianism, in Bessarabia was perceived in a completely different way. "The only concern of the boyars, the clergy and the peasantry", Ghibu wrote, "was the defence of Holy Russia", while nobody cared about Romania³⁴. While thousands of Romanian Transylvanians had deserted from the Habsburg army to enter the ranks of the Romanian army, nothing like that occurred in Bessarabia, where the Orthodox Church had instilled in the population the certainty that Russia had a historical mission for the defence of Christianity³⁵. Likewise, also diplomacy, leadership, and public opinion in Romania had directed their attention to Transylvania rather than Bessarabia, because in Romania since the end of the 19th century an active pressure group made up by Transylvanian exiles had been active, while nothing similar had happened in relation to Bessarabia. At the outbreak of the Russian revolution of February 1917, when Ghibu came to Chişinău, there was therefore no Romanian irredentist movement worthy of the name and Romania itself was not particularly attractive, being a defeated and occupied country, locked up in Moldavia under Russian protection.

In March 1917, the Chişinău Soviet was born and other Soviets saw the light throughout the region, where Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries prevailed. Moldavian nationalists were trying to act deftly in this context, hoping to gain to their cause part of the population, in particular teachers and soldiers, who were the most politicized categories, nevertheless without abandoning the democratic and revolutionary mainstream³⁶. On 20 March 1917, Ghibu and the other Transylvanian

33. On this issue Ghibu wrote about 500 essays, among volumes and articles: Braga, *Dilemele lui Onisifor Ghibu*, 83.

34. Onisifor Ghibu, *De la Basarabia rusească la Basarabia românească*, ed. Marian Radu (Bucureşti: Editura Semne, 1997), 53.

35. *Ibidem*, 54.

36. Alberto Basciani, *La difficile unione. La Bessarabia e la Grande Romania 1918-1940*, preface by K. Hitchins (Roma: Aracne, 2007), 81.

nationalists gave a decisive contribution for the creation of the Moldavian National Party, which proposed the autonomy of Bessarabia on a national basis, putting aside, as Ghibu wanted, “all the social slogans of the revolution of Petrograd”³⁷.

On the strategy of the new party, Ghibu had a point of view different from that of the Moldavian nationalists’ leader Pantelimon Halippa. In effect, the latter was particularly receptive to the slogans of the Social Revolutionaries, supporting the idea of an expropriation of the boyar landowners, to share the lands among peasants without compensation. Although sensitive to the peasant question, Ghibu was culturally far from revolutionary suggestions, rather fitting in the vein of traditional agrarianism: for him the peasant question had to be solved through a series of measures planned by a far-sighted leadership and not conquered from below. Furthermore, in the particularly complex situation in which the Moldovan national movement acted, Ghibu believed that a strategy based on classist criteria would be a political suicide. Instead, he asked for a classless cohesion with the goal of the national autonomy from Russia and the union with the Greater Romania.

If Halippa wanted to rule out an alliance with the boyars and the clergy, Ghibu replied that in that contingency it did not make sense “to talk about class, but only of Romanians”. Halippa refused an autonomy plan that did not include the request of universal suffrage, fearing that otherwise Bessarabia could be put “in the hands of priests and boyars”. Ghibu proposed an organic vision, where the only discriminating factor was the ethno-national one: “We must not make it a matter of class, but we should build a program that unites all of us [...] even the priests”³⁸. The rift between social and national, between classism and inter-classism, continued to unravel a heated debate, quite surreal actually, given the objective conditions in which everything happened: pulverization of the Russian war effort on the one hand, and the progressively shaky situation of the Romanian government of Iași on the other.

Ghibu was a member of the committee for the drafting of the party programme, which was finally published on 9 April 1917 in the *Cuvânt moldovenesc*. It was a ten-point manifesto, which specified the main goals of the Moldavian nationalists: self-government and autonomy in the judicial, ecclesiastical, educational, and economic life of Bessarabia. A Diet was created in order to formulate laws for the region. However, no reference to an agrarian law was made, even though it was invoked by the peasantry, who had in the meantime occupied the large properties³⁹. The nationalist and pan-Romanian position of Ghibu in the new party

37. *Ibidem*, 75.

38. Ghibu, *În vîltoarea revoluției rusești. Însemnări “zilnice” ale unui ardelean, martor ocular – și mai mult decît atît – al revoluției rusești în anii 1917-1918, începînd cu ziua de 12 martie și pînă în ziua de 6 august 1917*, Ed. Octavian O. Ghibu (București: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1993), 21.

39. Basciani, *La difficile unione*, 79.

clashed with at least three positions hostile to him. The first, represented by the Moldavian social-revolutionaries, including Halippa, who favoured a more social orientation and wanted the exclusion of boyars and the clergy from the national movement. The second represented by the boyars, who wanted an autonomist party, from both Russia and Romania. The third by Russian revolutionaries, who held up the new party as a tool in the hands of “reactionary Moldavians”. Finally, Ghibu’s line prevailed and the Moldavian National Party began to proselytize classless, but especially among Moldavian officers and soldiers stationed in Odessa⁴⁰.

Moreover, Ghibu began an intensive campaign in order to educate Moldavian teachers to the usage of the Latin alphabet and to the discovery or rediscovery of the Romanian culture. Even this cultural action had a political aim, according to the postulates of the “national pedagogy” supported by Ghibu: the National Association of Teachers, founded in April 1917, was to be its instrument⁴¹. According to Ghibu, through these initiatives, he introduced in Bessarabia “a national ideology instead of an internationalist ideology, by which almost all Bessarabian intellectuals, more or less important alike, were fascinated”⁴².

In November 1918, the Austro-Hungarian Empire ceased to exist and in Hungary the republic was proclaimed by a radical-democratic government led by Mihály Károlyi, who tried to keep Transylvania tied to the Hungarian state⁴³. The negotiations between the Romanian National Council of Transylvania and the Hungarian government were carried out by Oszkár Jászi, Minister of Nationalities of the Károlyi government, aiming to find a temporary agreement based on a federal compromise⁴⁴. The Romanian National Council, also for the resolute decision of PNR’s president Iuliu Maniu, rejected the Hungarian proposals, demanding the union of Transylvania with Romania⁴⁵.

Ghibu, back to Transylvania, opposed from the outset any possibility of mediation with Budapest. On 1 December 1918, through the Grand National Assembly of Alba Iulia, the representatives of Transylvanian Romanians proclaimed the union of the region with Romania, forming a provisional government called Directive Council. Ghibu, appointed secretary general for Educational and Religious Affairs of the Directive Council, proceeded in order to achieve a rapid cultural re-conquest of the region, through measures of nationalization and Romanization of schools and

40. Ghibu, *De la Basarabia rusească*, 75.

41. Ghibu, *În vîltoarea revoluției rusești*, 60, 66.

42. Ghibu, *Pe baricadele vieții. În Basarabia revoluționară*, 79.

43. Péter Hanák, ed. *Storia dell’Ungheria* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 1996), 192-195.

44. Robert A. Kann, *Storia dell’Impero asburgico (1526-1918)* (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1998), 623; Oszkár Jászi, *The dissolution of the Habsburg monarchy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961).

45. Hitchins, *Conștiință națională*, 165-167; Ioan Scurtu, *Iuliu Maniu. Activitatea politică* (Iași: Tipografia Moldova, 2010), 20-23.

higher education. In particular, he focalized his action on the University of Cluj⁴⁶. In effect, the University of Cluj represented to the eyes of Romanian nationalists the symbol of the political and cultural hegemony historically exerted by the Magyars in Transylvania⁴⁷. On 15 January 1919, Ghibu wrote to Vasile Goldiș, the head of the department of Education, to call for an immediate nationalization of the university, noting that similar measures had been taken by France and Czechoslovakia with the universities of Strasbourg and Bratislava⁴⁸. Even in a memorial addressed to Iuliu Maniu, president of the Directive Council of Transylvania, Ghibu had expressed similar ideas, asking for a quick replacement of Hungarian teachers with Romanian teachers, thus obtaining the promulgation of a decree proclaiming that the university should become Romanian since 1 October 1919⁴⁹. Valeriu Braniște, who replaced Goldiș, appointed Minister of Transylvania in the government of Ion I.C. Brătianu, pretty soon gave white pages to Ghibu, who had also obtained by the Directing Council the support of the Cluj military garrison, in the case that the Hungarian staff of the university decided to resist the order of eviction⁵⁰.

In his memoirs, Ghibu assumed before history the responsibility for bringing into the flow of “Romanianism” the Transylvanian high culture, for too many centuries controlled by the “ethnic enemy”. On that issue, he wrote, he had played “a decisive role”⁵¹. On 9 May, after having ordered to the academic Senate an immediate oath of allegiance to the new Romanian state, and having received a refusal, Ghibu decided to act, assigning to Romanian professors the task of taking possession of their respective offices, with the support of some Romanian students. Then, he conquered the university “as an institution”, going to the Hungarian rector with the commander of the post and, receiving a new refusal to take the oath, asking the officer to accompany out the aged professor by an arm, as a “symbolic sign” of the conquest of the university⁵².

Of course, the Hungarian government gave a different version of the events, denouncing at the Peace Conference in Paris that the Romanians used the soldiers to drive away students and professors. Moreover, according to the Hungarians, the appointment of new Romanian teachers was made roughly and without relying on their actual scientific training⁵³. According to the first rector of the nation-

46. Onisifor Ghibu, *La a douăzecea aniversare a Universității Daciei Superioare*, II ed., Ed. Crișan Mircioiu (Cluj: Napoca Star, 2001), 39.

47. Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania. Regionalism, Nation Building and Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 129-161.

48. *Ibidem*, 222.

49. *Ibidem*, 219-227.

50. Ghibu, *La a douăzecea aniversare a Universității Daciei Superioare*, 42.

51. Ghibu, *În jurul preluării universității din Cluj* (București, 1931), 6.

52. *Ibidem*, 11-12.

53. Quoted in Sextil Pușcariu, *Memorii*, Ed. Magdalena Vulpe, preface by Ion Bulei (București: Editura Minerva, 1978), 385.

alized University of Cluj, Sextil Pușcariu, a Romanian nationalist himself, in the Directing Council “the political questions regarding the University prevailed over teaching and research” and members of the Directing Council often appointed as professors friends and protégés⁵⁴. Ghibu himself was appointed on 16 August 1919, professor of pedagogy⁵⁵.

The symbolic culmination of the cultural conquest of Transylvania was the official inauguration of the Romanian university, called “Superior Dacia University”, on 1 February 1920, in the presence of the Romanian royals and the diplomatic representatives of the great powers. After having defeated the Hungarian republic of Councils and having rejected any Hungarian revanchist ambition, the Greater Romania sealed its new role as a regional power, both as a guardian of the *status quo* in the Danube-Balkan area and as a bulwark of the West against the Eastern Bolshevism. According to Nicolae Iorga’s words, “the Romanian right on the national territory and the cultural value of our nation were never recognized more fully than there, in Cluj”⁵⁶. A scientific support to the Romanian right on Transylvania was given by Ioan Lupaș, a leading figure of the Romanian nationalism. In his inaugural address to his course of history of Transylvania, he proclaimed that “all the attempts to deprive this territory of its ancient character of ‘*Romanian land*’ were shattered against the extraordinary vitality of our nation, which endured 18 centuries of forced dominations and harsh oppression [...] without losing its hope in the great day of justice”⁵⁷.

The union of Transylvania with the Kingdom of Romania represents a periodizing turning point of great importance, as it entailed the transition of the Transylvanian Romanian nationalists from an opposition to a dominant situation, similarly to other minority nationalisms of the former Habsburg Empire. This change basically meant a translation of national “values” from liberal and inclusive paradigms into more radical and ethnic ideals⁵⁸. Ghibu did not escape this general

54. Pușcariu, *Memorii*, 389.

55. Braga, *Dilemele lui Onisifor Ghibu*, 91. See also Lucian Nastasă, “*Suveranii*” universităților românești. *Mecanisme de selecție și promovare a elitei intelectuale*, vol. I, *Profesorii Facultăților de Filosofie și Litere (1864-1948)* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Limes, 2007), 273: “As a matter of fact, the process [of foundation of the Romanian university] had been vitiated by many ‘non-didactic’ factors. Firstly, they decided not to co-opt any professor of the old Magyar university, regardless of his scientific value”.

56. Quoted in Petre Țurlea and Stelian Mândruț, eds. *Nicolae Iorga și Universitatea din Cluj. Corespondență (1919-1940)* (București: Academia Română, 2005), 46.

57. Ioan Lupaș, *Factorii istorici ai vieții naționale românești*, lecțiunea inaugurală, ținută la Universitatea din Cluj – 11 Noiembrie 1919 (Cluj: Institutul de Arte Grafice “Ardealul”, 1921), 14-15.

58. Santoro, *Dall’Impero asburgico alla Grande Romania*; Marco Revelli, *Tra rivoluzione e reazione: la crisi del primo dopoguerra in Europa*, in Nicola Tranfaglia and Massimo Firpo, eds. *La Storia. I grandi problemi dal Medioevo all’età contemporanea*, vol. IX, *L’età contemporanea*, t. IV, *Dal primo al secondo dopoguerra* (Torino: Utet, 1984), 1-30.

drift towards radicalism. The freedoms he requested for Romanians before the war, above all in the educational field, were completely denied by him to the Hungarians after the war⁵⁹. Moreover, Ghibu's nationalism was also a small-Transylvanian one, because he continued to defend the Transylvanian regional prerogatives versus Bucharest "Byzantine" centralism and corruption. Therefore, he refused power positions at a central level, continuing his solitary anti-Hungarian battle from his university chair at Cluj.

WWII and the subsequent establishment of the communist regime led Ghibu, like other members of the Transylvanian nationalism, to a political trial on charges of fascism, which was followed by a short period of imprisonment and by a long period of marginalization⁶⁰. From the 1970s, when the "national-communist" regime of Ceaușescu re-evaluated the cult of the homeland, used obsessively in order to cement inner consensus to the government, Ghibu – who died in 1972 – was slowly rediscovered and studied, while his numerous writings, up to then disappeared from circulation, were published by regime's academics⁶¹.

59. Ghibu was active mainly on the issue of the religious union between Greek-Catholic and Orthodox Churches, in order to face Hungarian revanchism over Transylvania. See Onisifor Ghibu, *O imperioasă problemă națională: unitatea religioasă a Românilor* (Beiuș, 1931).

60. Ghibu, *Ziar de lagăr. Caracal, 1945*, eds. Romeo Dăscălescu and Octavian Ghibu (București: Editura Albatros, 1991), VII. See also Braga, *Dilemele lui Onisifor Ghibu*, 127-134.

61. Gal, *Onisifor Ghibu*, 208-239.

CIVIL SOCIETY



THE ASSASSINATION IN SARAJEVO REFLECTED IN *GAZETA DE TRANSILVANIA*



RĂDUCU RUȘEȚ, TIBERIU IORDAN

Abstract

The Great War, as it is known in history, has generated an increased interest from Romanian and foreign historians, and the *Assassination in Sarajevo* was the moment that changed the history of mankind, as it was the pretext of the outbreak of WWI in Europe. With the passage of time we observed the transition from the event, political and diplomatic presentation of the war, to the description of the trenches, of the soldiers, of aspects pertaining to the history of sensibilities and collective mentalities. Therefore, this article can be included in this latter category, due to the testimony and descriptions of eyewitnesses. This historical approach aims to reconstruct the moment of assassination of the heir Prince of Austria-Hungarian crown and of his wife, on 28 June 1914. We will present this historic moment using news releases, being guided in our approach by the details identified in *Gazeta de Transilvania*.

Keywords

World War I, assassination, news releases, war, eyewitnesses, trial

The reason for the attack in Sarajevo

THE CURRENT study, dedicated to the attack in Sarajevo, reveals the importance of the study of such a topic in the context of the Romanian and European historiography that approaches the research theme of the First World War. All these editorial approaches, symposia, scientific events, colloquia, exhibitions, projections of film can be analysed in connivance with the commemorations dedicated to this event that occurred in 2014, to the achievement of a century of the outbreak of the Great War.¹

This research assumes to reconstruct, at the scientific and methodological level, the bomb attempt in Sarajevo based on the news press releases. This approach is interesting and also relevant from a historic point of view, since we know that the press is an important source of research which cannot be passed over in the analysis of significant moments in the national or international history².

The first information and news about the murder arrived at the editorial office *Gazeta de Transilvania* by telegraph, on Sunday evening, 28 June 1914, and also in the first part of the second day. The first news published in *Gazeta de Transilvania* make reference to the political-social and national context in which the attack was committed.

At the same time we found out, from this publication edited in the city of Brașov, about the reason for the murder, its political implications, the way it was committed, and details about attackers. The conspirators took into account the possibility of the failure of the bomb attack, and so they decided that one of them would shoot Franz Ferdinand. More details and useful information about this dramatic episode were reported in the press and so we found out that against the royal family two attacks had been committed: one with a bomb and the second with a revolver. The second attempt, the one with the revolver, had been fatal, killing at the same time Franz Ferdinand and his wife. We are informed by these news that the crown prince was announced about the possibility of an attack in Sarajevo, but had not taken any measure of security. The cause of the attack was one of politics and the criminals were two Serbs³.

1. Selected: Anastasie Iordache, "Romanians in the First World War" in *Treaty of Romanian History*, VII, II. *From Independence to the Great Union (1878-1918)*, Ed. Gheorghe Platon (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2003), 396. See the entire Chapter VI, 395-453; Gheorghe Iacob, *Romanian during the establishment of national states 1859-1918*, in *The History of Romania. Compendium*. Ed. Ioan Aurel Pop and Ioan Bolovan (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Academy, Centre for Transylvanian Studies, 2007), 514-534; Mihai Bărbulescu and Dennis Deletant, et. al., *History of Romania* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1998), 415. 412-421.
2. Toader Nicoară, *Clio în orizontul Mileniului trei. Noi exporări ale istoriografiei contemporane*, Vol. II (Cluj-Napoca: Accent Publishing House, 2009), 141-152.
3. *Gazeta de Transilvania* 131 (1914): 3.

A simple semantic and hermeneutic interpretation offers us the chance to observe the title of the article, written with bold characters, and the strategy of the editorial message, with a tremendous propaganda character, which focuses on three key words: fanaticism, assassination, and murderers. Our historical-journalistic reconstitution is completed by details referring to those who committed the attempt, with a focus on their fanatic character. From this source we find that Gabrinovici was a 21 year old contractor and that he was an adept of pan Serbian movements in Belgrade. It was also known that he had made Serbian propaganda in Sarajevo. The bomb was delivered to him from abroad. The one who committed the murder, Gavrillo Princip, was caught by the people who witnessed the attack and was beaten to blood. Finally, he was found by the police and confessed that he had committed the murder, because he was a big enemy of imperialism. The press was shaping the idea according to which the two responsible committed this murder due to the express order of some secret societies. However, they did not confess anything⁴.

The description of the attack

AT THIS stage of our historical exposé, we shall present how the bombing was done. The heir couple was expected to arrive to the town hall in Sarajevo at around 10:00 a.m. They were in the car, approaching the town hall, while Gabrinovici threw a bomb toward the princely vehicle. From this first attack, with the bomb, the royal family got away alive. Famous are until today Franz Ferdinand's words, when he met the mayor of Sarajevo: "Sir Mayor! We came to Sarajevo as guests and I see that we're welcomed with bombs"⁵. From the city hall, Franz Ferdinand went to the hospital, to check general Merissi's state of health, badly injured. On the way from the city hall to hospital the second attack took place. At a road junction, a student named Gavrillo Princip, shot two bullets towards the royal car. The bullets found their target. The wife of crown prince, Princess Sofia, was hit in the haunch and the bullet perforated her abdomen. Franz Ferdinand was hit in the head by the other bullet. Both shots were fatal. Franz Ferdinand and Princess Sofia were taken to the hospital, but doctors could not do anything to save them. Both of them died shortly after the attack⁶.

Of the reported facts it is obvious that the news was presented in different versions in *Gazeta de Transilvania*, according to the source and the amount of information. As the time passed by, new details occurred. In the further investigations it has been established that the Archduke was shot in the neck, the bullet perfo-

4. *Gazeta de Transilvania* 131 (1914): 3.

5. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 131 (1914): 3.

6. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 131 (1914): 3.

rating his aorta, and his wife was deadly shot in the abdomen with two bullets. If in the first press release the information was that Franz Ferdinand was shot in the head, the news from 30 June 1914 shows us that the crown prince was shot in the neck. Regarding his wife, the information remains unchanged – the death being caused by injury in the area of the lower abdomen. Two days after the attack you could read in *Gazeta de Transilvania* an emotional article about something that the archduke Franz Ferdinand told his wife, Sofia, just before his last breath, he said: "Sophie, live to be the protector of our children!"⁷. In that moment, the journalists wrote – they themselves touched by the information – Franz Ferdinand could not think that his wife would die soon. In the moment of the shooting, the crown prince rose, but immediately fell again in the cushions of the car. His wife, wanting to protect him, was killed, too⁸.

To manage to remake the thread of events of those days of tensions, which led in the end to such terrible transformations at social and political level, affecting many nations, reporters from *Gazeta de Transilvania* used especially the news coming from Sarajevo. In the attempt of shaping the inedited aspects of this tragic event, the Transylvanian journalist drew an alarm signal regarding the veracity of the news releases of those days, and the fact that many news did not correspond to the truth and were exaggerated. From the declarations taken from the arrested people resulted that behind the attack there was a worldwide conjuration with headquarters in Belgrade, which prepared the bombing. After the discovery of the plot, 30 students, who had come from outside the city, were expelled from Sarajevo. In the next days, other young men considered suspects were sent outside the city. In a house on 6, Ullca Pakti St., the authorities found, buried in the courtyard, the bomb which Grabes was supposed to use if Princip did not succeed in his operation. The police identified also the location where the assassination was decided to take place – this being the Veinici confectionery from Sarajevo⁹.

A full set of news and short articles, marked with the name of the city from where the information came – Sarajevo, Bucharest, Vienna, Ischi, Metcovi, Prague – could be read on 29 and 30 of June, or on 1st of July. These articles brought out more interesting details. For example, the royal car was passing by Francisc Iosif Street when people, gathered to see the crown prince and his wife, heard the two shots. The Duchess of Hohenberg was the first who was shot, this being hit by the bullet in the rib, the second bullet pierced the Archduke carotid and he died on the spot. The attack occurred with such a rapidity, and in the state of agitation which was created, many people did not realize that near them a murder took place and bullets were shot¹⁰. Immediately after having been shot, the duchess

7. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 132 (1914): 3

8. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 132 (1914): 3.

9. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 135 (1914): 2.

10. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 131 (1914): 3.

fainted and fell over her husband and shortly after her he passed out, too. Those present at the attack and the passers-by were caught by rage. The mob caught Gavrillo Princip and knocked him down¹¹.

Very interesting are the reports made by eye witnesses, the protagonists being: a lady, a hairdresser, an eyewitness of the first attempt, and a man called Marosi.

In the lady's statement, witness to the second attempt, the one with the revolver, it appears that just before the attack she was located, along with a friend, on the Frantz Joseph Street, where she noticed a group of three young people who seemed that they were up to something. From their garment they looked like workers. They met with two girls who, after a short while, warned the lady and her friend to leave the location because they were in danger. The behaviour of the young man with a hard hat, which was observed keeping a hand in his pocket, betrays the behaviour of a potential suspect. After the two ladies observed his behaviour and attitude, they decided to announce the police. There is the possibility that the two witness were heard by the three young people, because the two of them with soft hats immediately left the place, with mistrustful looks. Soon after that, the royal car appeared and the two witnesses heard two shots¹².

A hairdresser, eyewitness of the first attack reported that he had seen a man who threw a bomb towards the official car. After that, he hit the man who jumped in the river. The Barber declared that two agents and a policeman jumped into the river and pulled the attacker out of the water¹³.

At the moment of the first attack, after the bomb blast, the crowd panicked, not knowing that they were in the presence of an attack. During the scrimmage a lot of children and women were injured. The crowd gathered in front of the house of vice-president Simovici, across the street from the place of the attack, were lots of windows were broken. Also, the telegraph wires were ripped¹⁴.

An eyewitness to the first attempt, called Marosi, who was the first to put his hand on Gabrinovici, told reporters that the first cars that appeared on street were those with policemen and the mayor. Shortly after that, the one carrying the Archduke, Princess Sofia, and general Potiorek appeared, too. Suddenly, Marosi saw how a young man who was sitting on the other side of the bridge came closer and threw an object towards the Archduke. With this man there was another young man who, after the release of the bomb, left quietly. The missile passed over the roof of the motor vehicle, falling on the ground. A roar was heard immediately and Marosi ran towards the one who had launched the bomb, but he jumped in the Millszczka River. Marosi, together with a policeman, also jumped into water

11. *Ibidem*.

12. *Ibidem*.

13. *Ibidem*.

14. *Ibidem*.

and finally managed to pull the attacker out of the river. After that they turned him over to the police¹⁵.

After the assassination, police started to make arrests and searches were involved. Police raids led to the arrest of 80 people, a large part of which were women. The house of Gabrinovici was searched. All those arrested were subjected to a severe and thorough interrogation, and during the evening were transported under escort to the military jail. In this context marked by arrests, questioning searches and investigations to identify the accomplices continued. Police also arrested another person close to the city hall, who was wearing Turkish clothes, but in the end the police established that he was Serbian. On the background of the assassination, disorders and anti-Serbian manifestations took place in Mostar, the capital of Herzegovina. At the same time, many troops arrived in the area of the manoeuvres and they were spread in different parts of the city. Immediately after the attempt, all shops were closed¹⁶. The bomb attack injured 20 persons, damaged several buildings and destroyed the phone wires. The rumour about the assassination of the Hohenzollern family spread very quickly in all environments and social spheres. The research continued, newspapers were full of news about the death of the royal couple. When he heard this terrible news, the old sovereign Francisc Iosif remained transfixed a period of time and after a brief insight exclaimed: "Great! The fate does not spare me!"¹⁷.

Very suggestive is the capability of prediction of colonel Lesjanin, a Serbian military attached from Vienna, who, three weeks before the attack, told the correspondent of Emperor Francis Joseph, that they were very worried about the manoeuvres that were taking place in Bosnia, because the people of Serbia were irritated due to the concentration of the troops at the border. The royal family was notified about the possibility of an attempt in Sarajevo, both by colonel Lesjanin and by the Minister of Serbia to Vienna, Ioanovici, who drew attention of the authorities in Bohemia, to the Archduke and the Duchess of Hohenberg. Princess Sofia wished to accompany her husband on this trip and stated the following: "If my husband's life is in danger because he is doing his duty, then my place is with him"¹⁸. On the background of the announced dangers, Franz Ferdinand wanted to go alone to Sarajevo, but after the insistent entreaties, the crown prince agreed that Sofia accompany him on the journey¹⁹.

The next in line to the throne was the young Carol Francis Joseph, aged 27, having military training and political-diplomatic studies. Being the presumptive heir to the throne, he had been trained since childhood in the spirit of the royal

15. *Ibidem*.

16. *Ibidem*.

17. *Ibidem*.

18. *Ibidem*.

19. *Ibidem*.

family, being immersed since he was young in the science of ruling and the political-diplomatic art²⁰.

Press statements about the attack

AFTER THE attempt, many political figures or other personalities made statements. The archbishop Stadler, who was part of the Archduke's entourage, said to journalists that the assassination was the consequence of historical developments, and that sooner or later Franz Ferdinand would still have fallen in their hands. The archbishop Stadler confirmed the information about the last words of Franz Ferdinand, in which he whispered to his wife: "I am dying...love our children for me too".²¹ The archbishop also gave some details about the wounded Duchess. He declared to the press that the autopsy showed that Sofia had a ripped aorta and that she lived only 14 minutes after she was shot. In the Romanian press, we have a statement made by the politician Take Ionescu from Bucharest, who said to a journalist, on 29 June 1914, that the assassination was a big tragedy not only for the old emperor, but for the whole monarchy, giving the impression that archduke Franz Ferdinand was very loved by all the nations of the empire. However, his death would lead to mistrust in the Slavs from the south. At the end of his declaration, Take Ionescu reiterated that the assassination was a big tragedy and expressed his regrets on behalf of the whole Romanian nation for the death of the Archduke and his wife²².

The reaction of the demonstrators after the murder

THE NIGHT between 29 and 30 of June street protests started in Sarajevo. Croats and Muslims manifested together shouting: "Down with the Serbs! Death to the Serbians!"²³

When the crowd of protesters reached the place of the attack the demonstrators uncovered their heads and sang a popular hymn²⁴. While the Croats and the Mohammedans protested violently against the Serbs, a group of Serbian students appeared unexpectedly on the street. Everybody thought that a bloodshed would follow. Instead, they assisted to a surprising scene, because the Serbians did not act in accordance with the principle of reactionary violence. They kneeled and

20. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 134 (1914):1.

21. *Ibidem*.

22. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 132 (1914):3.

23. *Ibidem*.

24. *Ibidem*.

started to pray. After this unexpected situation, all the protesters (Mohammedans, Croatians, etc.) joined the group of students in their prayer. This change of situation demonstrates that turning points (violence, death, tragedies, social tension of all kinds, natural disasters natural disasters, calamity, etc.), prefigured in our case through the death of Hohenzollern family, the heiress to the Crown of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, bring people together, regardless of previous disputes. In this approach to achieve a collective prayer, one could hear a murmur, which became more and more pronounced, and from all the voices the following words were emphasized: “Our Father Who art in heaven”. During this solemn moment through which the demonstrators expressed the dimension of their religiosity, there was an exemplary peace and nobody dared to disturb the peace of those who were praying²⁵.

In the evening of June 30, 1914, anti-Serbian demonstrations intensified. Protesters vandalized the city, destroying the shops belonging to Serbs and their houses, they occupied the Europa Hotel, destroying at the same time and the furniture from the Imperial Hotel. The number of destroyed buildings raised to 200, the police was no longer able to face all those demonstrations of force. The Jovicici brothers shop was destroyed and then, one of the Jovicici brothers shot a demonstrator carrying a portrait of Franz Joseph, killing him on the spot. This incident enraged the mob. Fearing for their lives, the Jovicici brothers tried to escape, but one of them was caught and beaten very badly, almost to death if the policemen had not interfered²⁶.

In the context of the street protests and of the manifestations with anti-Serbian character, in the village of Voca, on the Bosnian territory, ten Serbs had the intention to blow up the prison in which the attackers were jailed. The police intervened, taking the ten criminals to a military prison²⁷.

The funerals

THE TRAGIC news about the death of Franz Ferdinand and his wife spread very quickly in all socio-political environments from all over the world. All newspapers in Europe and not only published articles about the death of the Hohenzollern family, which represented the most significant event. Headlines on the first page of the newspapers announced with black bold letters: “Death of royal couple! Francis Ferdinand has died! Franz Ferdinand is dead!” Those are just a few titles from the press of those days. Soon after the attack the world attention would fall upon the three children of the imperial couple. The children were at the castle in Chlumetz

25. *Ibidem*.

26. *Ibidem*

27. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 147 (1914):3.

at the time they received the tragic news from their teacher, Stanovski. Hearing the news, the children burst into tears. Also, Countess Henriette Chotek, the sister of the Duchess of Hohenberg, fainted on hearing the terrible incidents²⁸.

In order to prepare for the funeral rituals, the bodies of the two sovereign were embalmed, and the sculptor Davilci made their mortuary masks. After that, the bodies were deposited at the chapel of the royal mansion. At 6 o'clock in the evening, the two coffins were transported with two hearses, with military honours, to the railway station, and from there on a special train to Metković. In that locality, the bodies were embarked on a ship to the town of Trieste²⁹.

Many Romanian politicians and the king of Romania, Carol I of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, expressed their regrets and the statements were published in press. In this way, *Gazeta de Transilvania* published, in its turn, some of these declarations. Professor dr. Ioan Scurtu, the leader of the delegation which was received in audience at Sinaia by the late Archduke Franz Ferdinand, expressed regrets by a telegram addressed to the office of the National Romanian Party from Hungary, by which it was noted that the entire country, but especially the Transylvanian Romanians, deplored the death of the two. The Romanians from Transylvania were astounded by the news of the death, especially because the royal couple was seen like the only guarantee for their independence and the affirmation of the political-law of the Transylvanian Romanians and of the other nationalities belonging to the political-administrative Austro-Hungarian monarchy³⁰.

The press also revealed information about the Romanian king Carol I's reaction on hearing the terrible news. It is said that he exclaimed: "This cannot be! This cannot be!"³¹

The sumptuousness in which the funeral procession was organized is an additional argument of the importance of the event. From Trieste, the royal coffins were transported to Vienna, with a train specially prepared. All the way from Sarajevo to Vienna, hundreds and hundreds of people came to see the funeral process, the coffins were received in the solemn sound of churches ringing bells, officials and police ensured that everything went according to the plan. The funeral cortege arrived in the port of Metković at 6 o'clock in the morning, being received by police, priests, and the mob. The two coffins were taken from the train by sailors and put on the Dalmat yacht. The moment was accompanied by 19 cannon volleys fired by the *Virbus Unitis* dreadnought. The two coffins were then loaded on the *Virbus Unitis* dreadnought, which left for Trieste, having the war flag and the Archduke's banner lowered, as a sign of mourning³². The earthy remains reached

28. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 133 (1914):3.

29. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 132 (1914): 3.

30. *Ibidem*.

31. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 133 (1914): 1.

32. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 133 (1914): 3.

the port of Trieste at 5:30. The Virbus Unitis dreadnought was accompanied in this trip by five other war ships - Tegethoff, Zrimyi, Radezky, Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand, and Amiral Spaun. The governor of Trieste, Prince Hohenlobe was the one who waited for the coffins with flower crowns. He was followed by a large amount of people and by the army. A ceremony was organized in Trieste during the transportation of the coffins from the Virbus Unitis to the railway station, where the bodies were put in a trains to Vienna. The numerous presence of people demonstrated the solemnity and the importance of the moment, but also the significant role that Franz Ferdinand played in the relation of the Crown with the nations within the Empire³³.

After a long journey, the inanimate bodies of Franz Ferdinand and of his dear wife Sofia arrived in the south train station in Vienna at 10 o'clock in the evening, and were then taken with considerable pompe to the Hofburg church. The public was allowed, for several hours, to go there to see the coffins and say a prayer. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, in the presence of the emperor Francis Joseph, the earthly remains were blessed during a religious ceremony. In the evening, the coffins were put on the train again, for a final road. They were taken to the Archduke's castle in Artstetten, to be buried in the crypt, according to Franz Ferdinand's wish. There, the coffins were laid next to the tomb of their baby girl, one of the couple's children who had died three years before. The paternal love and the trauma of the royal family produced by the fact that the girl was still-born can be noted by the expressed desire, formulated during life time, to be buried beside her³⁴.

The interrogation of the attackers

IN THE context of the historical re-evaluation of the assassination in Sarajevo, it is relevant to analyse which was the attackers' point of view, their statements given in front of the police, and the prolonged interrogation to which they had been subjected. All those efforts were made to find out the identity of all criminals involved in this attempt and the dimensions of the conspiracy. Who were the attackers? How and why did they commit this crime? That was the political-social context of the criminal attack?

The first assailant from the accused box brought before the judge was Gabrinovici. He was very content that the attack had been successful and had no remorse. Gabrinovici said that he regretted the death of the Duchess, but he was pleased that the plan was done³⁵.

33. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 135 (1914): 2.

34. *Ibidem*.

35. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 133 (1914): 3.

Gavrillo Princip answered to the last question saying that he had planned the attack against the Archduke together with Gabrinovici, this attempt being elaborated for a long time. During the investigation, Princip confessed that they had been in Belgrade when they find out about the journey of Franz Ferdinand to Bosnia, and so they got the bombs from a man named Cigo from Belgrade. Gavrillo Princip and Gabrinovici arrived at 10 o'clock in the morning from Belgrade to Sarajevo and buried the bombs in the garden of the house in Sarajevo. They had already bought a house in Sarajevo, to help them commit the attack. During the searches in that house after the murder, the police found golden coins hidden under the bed and banknotes worth 2,000 koruna. After the murder, the full court received daily denunciation about the presumed assassins and accomplices. Many other arrests were made. The idea that the murder must be understood in the context of the pan-Serbian movement began to arouse. In this context, the deputy Atanas Sola, the president of the National Serbian Party is arrested after he was suspected that he had provoked the population to defend the attackers. Many other arrests were made in the trains going to Bosnabrod city. Some people who distributed manifests about the pan-Serbian movement were also arrested³⁶.

From Garvillo Princip's statement, from the interrogations, raids and arrests, results that the attack must be studied and looked at in the context of the movement of the Serbian emancipation. The threads and the plan of attack, frequent connections and contacts of the attackers with the world and leaders of the nationalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Albania and Montenegro demonstrate that the attack has to be analysed in the assembly of the national claims and of the identification of the national member in the Balkans. The investigation in the case of Franz Ferdinand's assassination continued with new arrests. As a result of an inquiry conducted, the two criminals confessed their nationality: Serbian Orthodox. The author of the first attempt, Gabrinovici, confessed that before the attack he was in Belgrade, form where he got a bomb with the purpose of killing the Archduke. Police investigations lead to the conclusion that the author of the second attack, Gavrillo Princip, was a secondary school student who had spent a lot of time around the Serbian revolutionaries in Belgrade and that he had returned to Sarajevo three months before the attack. During the questioning, Gavrillo Princip stated that he came back from Belgrade to Sarajevo with the express intention of killing an important person, a high dignitary, a man of state or leader, to revenge, in this way, the Serbs' nation. He saw in the visit of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand an appropriate time in committing the crime. He chose good spot, in the corner of Franz Josef Street, because he knew that the convoy would pass twice on that road. At the same time, he confessed the investigators that, in order not to be arrested as a suspect, he placed himself between

36. *Ibidem*, 2.

two known students, possible university colleagues³⁷. For the discovery of the conspiracy, important are also the statements and testimonies of the attackers made in front of the Judges and the investigators. One of the conclusions is that the attack was very well organized, to the smallest details³⁸.

The first interviewed was Gabrinovici, which confessed that he had met with Gavrillo Princip in a coffee shop in Belgrade and established the plan of the stroke. After they took some decisions, the two began a research for a way to get some bombs. The first one they appealed to was a man, Millan Pribicsevici, the secretary of the Narodna Ochrida in Belgrade, former officer in the Austro-Hungarian army from which he left. At that moment he was the chief of staff of the Serbian army and brother of Szvetozar Pribicsevici, a deputy, and brother of Valerian Pribicsevici, which had been the main culprit in the process of treason of 1908. Millan Pribicsevici guided them to Cigo, an official railways Serbian. He promised to get projectile weapons from the arsenal of the military equipment from Kragujevac. Cigo indeed gave them 6 bombs and 6 revolvers, with one condition – they had to find other five persons to help them to commit the bombing. At the interrogation, Gabrinovici confessed that another person came with them, a certain Trifun Grabes, a student in Belgrade. We can see that in this plot several persons were involved, who came one by one to Sarajevo, in order not to become a suspect. In the morning of 28 June 1914, Gabrinovici Princip and Grabes met at the confectionery Vlainica on 3 Csumuria-Ulica Str. to discuss the last details. Princip brought with him the bombs and revolvers, giving all the others instructions for committing the attack. Princip also decided where was the best for everyone of them to sit in the street, for the plan to succeed³⁹.

The second one interviewed was Princip, who claims that he was sorry that they did not use all the bombs and he gave detailed information about his allies, wanting to make complete confessions about those involved in the murder. After that the police arrested the owner of the confectionary, Giyuro Vleivici, and the confectionery was closed. Eventually, the third person involved in attack, the student Trifun Grabes, was arrested in the village of Prancea. He admitted to having received a bomb and a revolver when he met Princip at the confectionary. He also got some poison to kill himself if he got caught. Trifun Grabes didn't use the bomb, because Gavrillo Princip managed to fulfil the plan⁴⁰.

After the arrest of the conspirators, the police made other arrests in Sarajevo, and they retained Ilita, a teacher who took part in the distribution of the bombs. A plumber, Vucsinovics, was also captured, who had taken a picture of him and

37. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 133 (1914): 2.

38. *Ibidem*.

39. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 135 (1914): 2.

40. *Ibidem*.

Gabrinovici just several days before the attack. Before arriving to Sarajevo, the bombs were buried in the ground at the border of Serbia, in Losnita locality⁴¹.

The verdict of the judges in the case of the assassination in Sarajevo was that Gabrinovici and Gavrillo Princip were the main culprits and had to be judged. The process began in September, being divided into three stages: the first against the attackers and the accomplices, the second against the participants in the plot, and the third against the politicians. This process was split into three parts because they did not have a hall big enough for this trial in Sarajevo⁴².

The end of the trial in Sarajevo

INVESTIGATIONS IN this case continued during the year 1915, in the course of this year the judges established the sentences for those responsible. Some of them were shot in the prison court-yard, at 9 o'clock in the morning (Voljko Gabrinovici, Hisko Iovanovici, and Danillo Ilych). The sentence of the others convicted in this process were switched from capital punishment to life imprisonment. As we have already stated, we reiterate the hypothesis according to which in the year 1915 were completed investigations for the process in Sarajevo, bringing the punishment to the last ones condemned. In the context of the completion of this trial filed, we remind the way through which was solved this attempt, which has changed the world history, 1915 being the year when a part of the conspirators were executed, and others were sentenced to life imprisonment⁴³.

In the year 1916 another accomplice to the murder was discovered. As a result of the research carried out in a camp of Serbian prisoners in Austria, colonel Radovici, who was also involved in other attacks (was an accomplice to the assassination of king Alexander and Queen Draga) was arrested and imprisoned in Salzburg. At the end of the investigations he was sent to the court-martialled. It is worth mentioning that the investigations in the case of the assassination in Sarajevo continued in the years 1915 and 1916⁴⁴.

41. *Ibidem*.

42. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 147 (1914): 3.

43. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 7 (1915): 2.

44. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 17 (1915): 2.

The orphan children

THE WHOLE royal family was affected by the death of Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sofia. Learning the sad news, a family council was organized, to determine how they should communicate the death of their parents to the children. This task was given to their professor of religion, Stanovszky. Entering in childrens' room, professor Stanovszky told them that a telegram arrived from Sarajevo, bringing the news that their father and mother were so sick and that the situation was so dramatic that only God could help. By the appeal of professor Stanovszky to religion and the suggestion made to children to pray in these dramatic moments for their parents, it is noted the religious dimension of the human being, the approach to God in the turning point of their life (accidents, death, tragedies, and hardships of all kinds). Hearing the news coming on the telegraphic way, Princess Sofia, aged, burst into tears and started to cry: "They are dead! I know it...they have died!"⁴⁵. The two boys huddled in their seats and begun to cry, like their sister. In those dramatic moments, the uncles and the aunts of the children came in their room. Countess Henriette Chotek fainted when she saw the children. The tragedy affected also the servants of the house. On hearing about the death of Franz Ferdinand and his wife, the servants kneeled and started to weep. We also find out that the children were so tormented that they couldn't sleep all night, only in the morning did they fall asleep. A person from the Archduke staff made a statement to a journalist from the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, stating that on his way to Sarajevo, Franz Ferdinand had a difficult separation, in the castle of Chlumetz, from his children⁴⁶.

With these articles about the sufferings of the royal family and those of the couple's children, the *Gazeta de Transilvania* concluded the reporting about the assassination. All these aspects, some with informative nature, other with a narrative one, shall be lodged in the outline of the assembly of historical reconsider of this attack with an international echo⁴⁷.

45. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 135 (1914): 2.

46. *Gazeta de Transilvania*, 135 (1914): 2.

47. *Ibidem*.

Conclusions

THE ATTACK in Sarajevo has marked a significant moment for all nationalities belonging to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, but more so for the socio-political and territorial changes that the European monarchies had to face. The time of empires was gone, it was already an old reality, in a Europe in which nations desired more and more to have the right of self-determination. The transition from empires to national states was made gradually, with social powerful dissensions, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in the present case, fighting back very strongly in front of those changes.

In the context of these socio-political changes, it is interesting to analyse which has been the spark, the cause which has led to the outbreak of the First World War. In all the specialized literature (books, publications, research, articles) it is well known that the moment that has produced the click at the mentality level of the people and of the leadership of the upper part of the great powers, was this assassination in Sarajevo, of 28 June 1914, the attacks in which the Prince heir of the Austro-Hungarian Crown, Franz Ferdinand, and his wife, Sofia, died. This attack to the family life of the Hohenzollerns should be treated in connivance with a whole range of murders in which the different rulers, heir princes, successors to the throne of various countries or empires have been killed. Viewed from this point of view, but also from the perspective of the movement for Serbian national emancipation, the bomb attack in Sarajevo shall be lodged in the assembly of a murder with a strong social, political-administrative and national load, over which we cannot pass in our effort of understanding the metamorphosis of old monarchies and historical empires (The Ottoman Empire, the Czar's empire, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy) and their gradual dissolution toward a new configuration under the ages of the national law.

On the background of these social and historical changes, the press has played an important role. The current new ideas, the great events and the announcement of the proximity of the First World War were discussed in the press. Leaders of opinion analysed, reporters informed, news was commented, debated, and in this case, the assassination in Sarajevo was on the front page of all European newspapers, big or small. This tragic event was announced in all countries from the continent through the press.

The tragic news was also announced in the Romanian press and the *Gazeta de Transilvania* dedicated a large space to this event, many days in a row and many weeks and months after the event occurred. Extensive descriptions, news and announcements were made in this local newspaper of Brasov. The interest of the Romanian journalists for this subject is revealed in the pages of the *Gazeta de Transilvania*, in which one can read even today interesting descriptions, news,

political press statements, comments about this assassination, debates about the causes, about the trial, news about the investigations. No other subject before has been so deeply described, for such a long time, in this newspaper.

The originality of the research consisted in the identification of the journalistic investigations, and their exploitation in the current research reveals the national importance and at the same time the congruency at the European level on all channels for the dissemination of this tragic event.

Novelty items of this research consisted in capturing the related aspect linked to the reason of the bombing, the description of the bombing, the eye witnesses records, the statements made to the press by some high Romanian dignitaries and foreign ones about the event that has become known as *the calamity of the century*, the reaction of the demonstrators after the murder, the funeral and the steps taken to bring the lifeless royal bodies to Vienna, the questioning of the attackers, the process in Sarajevo, the reaction of the members of the royal family, the way they announced the children, all these taking a step toward a new historiographical level - bearing one of the cultural history of the war, a collective mentality, of the mental implementation and of the emotions manifested by the public and at an affective-familial level.

CHILDREN DURING A TIME OF WAR

A Transylvanian Perspective on World War I



ANA VICTORIA SIMA, MIRELA ANDREI POPA



Abstract

Children and childhood have represented, to this day, a well-nigh inexistent topic in the Romanian historiography dedicated to World War I. Their presence in the war, especially on the domestic front of all the countries involved in the global conflict, calls for a reassessment of the historical sources and for a reconsideration of this theme alongside the major directions of research on the war. Our study aims to analyse the situation of children in Transylvania, seen both as “innocent victims” and as local protagonists in or witnesses of the conflict. In a comparative approach with the situation of children in Western Europe, the dimensions of childhood as a social phenomenon in wartime Transylvania may evince numerous similarities, but also differences. It should be noted that it was possible for such differences to exist not only between the status of children on the Eastern vs. the Western front, but also within one and the same Transylvanian province. These differences were the result of several factors, ranging from their ethnic and religious status to the gap between the urban and the rural milieus, or between their standards of living and literacy levels, which were rather dissimilar among the Romanians, the Hungarians and the Saxons. Despite these differences and imbalances, our research has succeeded in identifying several distinctive characteristics of childhood during wartime. Thus, in Transylvania, children represented a mobilising and mobilised social category. The entire apparatus of institutions specifically targeted at childhood, such as school, the family or religion, as well as games, reading texts, etc. were deployed towards the mobilisation of children. However, children were not solely the addressees of this mobilising discourse, but also a category that was directly involved in meeting the needs generated by the front. This is attested by the “responsibilities” or the “occupations” assumed by children during the war years, from their everyday chores in the peasants’ farmsteads to their drafting the letters sent to those on the front and behind it, collecting medicinal herbs for the front, etc. These myriad facets of childhood during wartime reveal the fact that in Transylvania, like in all other areas afflicted by the war, children were the direct and indirect victims of the conflagration, which indelibly marked their destiny in the aftermath of the war.

Keywords

Children, childhood, war, Transylvania, home front, propaganda

"DEAR MUM, why is Dad not coming back from the front? ... Why are there soldiers in the world, Mum? Why are people fighting?"¹ During the years of World War I, these were some of the most frequently asked questions by the children who had been left at home, in the care of their mothers and of their elderly relatives in Transylvania. These gnawing questions kept haunting their minds as the universe of their childhood was brutally devastated by the ruthless hand of war. The backlash of the war had pervaded all the spheres of their lives: from formal schooling to church religiosity, from work in the fields to their household chores. The war had abruptly disrupted the natural rhythms of family life, making room for famine, cold, anxiety and gloom. All these relentlessly destroyed the universe of childhood, brutalizing and instrumentalizing it. In what follows, we shall examine this universe of childhood during wartime.

From the very outset, it should be noted that while in Western historiography, researches dedicated to the subject have registered considerable success since the 1970s, the investigations conducted by Romanian scholars on this topic have barely just begun. It is only in the past few years, marked by the centennial commemoration of World War I, that Romanian research has explored new facets of the war, including the subject of children and childhood during wartime.²

This study aims to analyse the situation of children in Transylvania, seen both as "innocent victims" and as local protagonists of and witnesses to the conflict. Thus, we shall adopt a new perspective that will seek to retrieve, as comprehensively as possible, the situation of this particular segment of the population, largely regarded, until quite recently, as "victims" of the war rather than as active participants in supporting the frontline.³ In reality, the presence of children on the domestic or the home front was undeniable.

Naturally, such an analysis would require identifying the main aspects that would legitimize our assumption that children represented a mobilizing and mobilized social category during the Great War. Starting from this objective, there are at least three questions that may lead to an answer in this respect. First, what was the role allotted to children and childhood in the process of mobilization for the war? Second, what forms and instruments of propaganda were specifically targeted at children? Last but not least, what were the stances assumed by children in their twofold capacity as victims of the war and as direct supporters of the war effort?

1. Alexandru Lupeanu Melin, "De la cei rămași acasă," in *Copiii în război. Schițe din zilele de acum*, edited by Alexandru Ciura, Alexandru Lupeanu Melin and Toma Cocișiu, in the Collection *Cărțile războiului*, supervised by Alexandru Lupeanu Melin (Blaj-Balasfalva, 1918), 13.
2. Ioana Elena Ignat Kisanovici, *Participare și mobilizare în Transilvania în primul război mondial* (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română/Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2016), 108-112.
3. *La prima guerra mondiale*, edited by Stephane Audoin-Rouzeau and Jean-Jaques Becker, (ed. in Italian edited by Antonio Gibelli, vol. II) (Piccola Biblioteca Einaudi, 2014), 50-51.

I. Childhood as a mobilizing universe of the war

IT IS widely acknowledged that in Transylvania, the war propaganda designed to support the mobilization and the deployment of military operations on the frontline relied on several conceptual categories, invested with a highly sensitive and distinctive symbolic value. Among them were children and the family. Along with the figure of the emperor, who represented the core element of discourse strategies aiming to catalyse the mobilization effort, children and the family had to uphold the call to arms and, above all, to maintain the combatants' high morale. Thus, children were invoked as a strong argument in propaganda attempting to persuade their fathers to go to battle, while their mothers were supposed to take upon their shoulders the entire burden of managing the household back home. The war was thus envisaged as a struggle for defending the children and, above all, for providing them with a better future.⁴ An analysis of the postcards and letters exchanged by soldiers and their relatives during the Great War may illustrate the important role assigned to children and the family in offering moral support to the men fighting in the trenches. For instance, Adam Stăncioiu, a Transylvanian soldier in the imperial army, wrote to his wife on 13 July 1915: "Much beloved Anița and my dearest sons! This brief letter will let you know that... I am fine... But I am in pain, my dear and beloved Anița and my sons, for I am consumed with sorrowful longing for you and I am worn down by the hardships we have to endure here... yesterday I got four letters from home and I heartily rejoiced at receiving them, as I found out that you are all healthy and in peace."⁵

The question that may be raised is this: why did children occupy such a privileged position in the soldiers' minds? One possible answer could refer to their status as defenceless persons, whose need for protection was more immediately evident than in the case of other population categories. Secondly, the special relation between soldiers and their offspring was also underpinned by a psychological motivation, as children were their descendants, in whom they had invested all their hopes, as well as the only humans these adults could rely on without reservation. Their wives were not always invested with the same level of trust, as it was not uncommon for soldiers to suspect their spouses of infidelity. That is why there existed a special relation between soldiers and their children, which was capitalized upon and exploited to the utmost by the war propaganda. This is attested by the postcards issued during the war, as their pictures almost invariably made reference to the front or to the families and the children that had been left back home. The most commonly encountered image, which became somewhat of a

4. *La prima guerra mondiale*, S. Audoin-Rouzeau et al., 51.

5. Aurel Răduțiu, *Romos (jud. Hunedoara). File de Cronică 1850-1950* (Deva: Editura Episcopiei Devei și Hunedoarei, 2015), 249.



Photo 1. SJCjAN, fund: Collection - *Letters from World War I*, file 60, f. 147.

“classical” icon in the war years, was that of the innocent child who needed to be protected. We may therefore infer that these images of children and the family were intended to convince the soldiers and the civilian population that the war required each and every form of support: from enrolment to fundraising collections for the war, bank loans, etc.

II. How could children be mobilized? Channels and means of propaganda in Transylvania during World War I

THE MOBILIZATION of children was part of a general process, which could be encountered in all the belligerent countries. The goal was to involve people from all walks of life in waging a total war against the enemy. In the case of children, the war had to be explained and justified before they could acquiesce to it and its dire consequences. In reality, however, this acquiescence was but a step on the way to building a patriotic moral, which, if deeply embedded into the minds of these youngsters, could impart to them the dutiful sense that they were contributing to the victory.⁶ They became thus the *little soldiers* who had to participate actively, each according to their age, in supporting the war effort. This is attested by the memories of one of the Romanian soldiers, Petru Vintilă, who was only 16 years old at the time when the war broke out, in 1914. According to him, “the years of the war had swiftly passed by, 1914 and 1915 had been filled with worries and troubles, with the hard work that pressed upon my shoulders, for I was now the only man in the house, left to do all the chores... In addition to working around the house, in the years 1914 and 1915, I was also conscripted for a month, together with other children and the men in the village who were over 42, as they took us to dig trenches up in the hills of Alion, above the village Tufari-Orșova.”⁷

Beyond this strategy, designed to make the population assume the necessity of the war at a more or less subconscious level, the propaganda of the belligerent states also aimed to instil a sense of guilt in children. More precisely, the children who had been left at home with their mothers and grandmothers had to prove themselves worthy of the men who had gone to the front, by maintaining an irreproachable conduct in school, in the family and in the community. Such an appeal was launched in Transylvania by the *Subcommittee for Improving the People's Fate*, at the beginning of 1915, and was distributed through the Greek-Catholic Diocese of Oradea to all its parishes and archpresbyteriates.⁸ Like the other appeals, it was translated into Romanian, in order to ensure its widest possible dissemination among the Romanian communities. According to this document, “that man or woman, be they young or old, who will not work in the fields, in workshops, in the economic court or around the domestic hearth also for those

6. *La prima guerra mondiale*, 52-53.

7. Petru Vintilă, *Omul născut pe brazdele plugului. Viață de orfan*, foreword by Nicolae Bocșan, edited, introductory study, index and notes by Lucrețiu Roșu (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2013), 119-120.

8. Blaga Mihoc, “Instituția eclezială în sprijinul Cetății (1914-1918)” in *Biserica Română Unită cu Roma Greco-Catolică – Istorie și spiritualitate. 150 de ani de la înființarea Mitropoliei Române Unite cu Roma la Blaj* (Blaj: Buna Vestire, 2003), 494-495.

who are shedding their blood on the battlefield for us, for those left at home, will be sinning against the nation..." Therefore, the text of the appeal demanded, "women, girls, young boys and children must work and exert themselves to carry out also the labour of those who are fighting for us and in our stead, defying the perils of war."⁹

Interestingly, this call imposed different expectations on boys and girls. The propaganda aimed to ingrain gender-sensitive messages into the minds of the youth. Thus, whereas boys faced the prospect of someday becoming soldiers and fighting on the battlefields, girls were relegated to the role of nurses or caretakers of the soldiers. To this end, girls were to be instructed from early childhood to help their mothers and the other family members in the household, as necessary steps for their future mission.

Achieving these objectives required a concerted effort, resorting to every means and ways through which children could be moulded as compliant individuals. Accordingly, the family, the school, the church, the press, games and toys played a crucial role in the instrumentalization of childhood and in the mobilization of children. Amongst the Romanians in Transylvania, the church, the school and the family represented the key channels for disseminating the culture of war. Given the confessional nature of the Romanian schools in Transylvania (they were under the patronage of the church), priests concurrently assumed the position of school headmasters. In this double capacity, priests were not only servants of the altar, but civil servants as well. Through them, the war propaganda sanctioned by the state was distributed to all the segments of the society, children included. Their efforts were reinforced by those of the teachers.

Messages were transmitted from top to bottom, via a pyramidal chain: from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction in Budapest to the two Romanian Churches in Transylvania, and from there to the parishes and the schools. This way, priests and teachers could become the main agents of the war propaganda. They were required to explain the war to children and persuade them that it was imperative to support it. An entire arsenal of specific instruments to be used by the church and the school was created: ministerial decrees, church circulars, school curricula and textbooks, postcards etc. In as early as the autumn of 1914, the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Budapest demanded, under Rescript No. 150.221 of 9 November, that royal school inspectors should collect, in their corresponding Transylvanian districts, the funds and objects raised by the primary school children to be sent as Christmas presents to the country's soldiers serving on the front lines. The Greek-Catholic Metropolitan Victor Mihályi of Apșa endorsed this directive issued to the parishes by sending the message through a circular. In the name

9. B. Mihoc, "Instituția eclezială în sprijinul", 510, 512.

10. National Archives of Romania, Alba County Branch (hereinafter SJAAN), fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1914, f. 66r.

of the ancestral faith, he urged that all parents should make a contribution, each according to their possibilities, sending their donations through their school-going children, so as to bring a little comfort, peace and joy to the military on the day of the Nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁰ As a result, the first collections of money and objects destined to the soldiers on the front were completed before Christmas. For instance, in the Greek-Catholic Archdiocese of Blaj, an amount of almost 3,000 kronas was collected,¹¹ the equivalent of a secondary-school teacher's salary for a year and a half. The fund-raising appeals addressed to the school children also continued during the following years. For example, the July 1915 issue of the journal *Transilvania* praised the teachers' prompt and zealous efforts to persuade their students that it was vital to support the war effort with their small savings. "This fund raising," the article stated, "was an excellent means to awaken the sense of self-sacrifice in the young students from the villages: they were all the happier to give away the fillérs they had gathered through hard toil as they were told that in this way they could aid their brothers, parents and relatives, who were risking their lives for the homeland."¹²

One year later, also around Christmas time, a ministerial order issued on 27 December demanded that the teachers in Transylvania and, in particular, the female elementary school teachers should involve their pupils, during home economics classes, in manufacturing clothing items for the soldiers on the front line, such as wool socks, shin protectors, gloves, etc. The order also specified that the raw material (wool yarn) would be provided for free through Hadsegélyző Hivatal, Budapest, V. Akadémia utca 17.¹³

Children were also constantly involved in the collection of medicinal plants for the front. There were countless circulars issued during the war which impelled teachers to motivate and provide their pupils with financial incentives if they harvested medicinal plants such as: elderflowers, lime-tree flowers, poppies, nettles, blackberry leaves, etc.¹⁴ An illustrative example is Circular No. 2831/1916. Issued on 10 June, it reproduced the recommendations of Ministerial Order No. 6580, which stated that this was a favourable period for harvesting elderflowers, lime-tree flowers and red field poppies, emphasizing that the army had a serious shortage of medicinal plants and urging the heads of schools at all levels to start a

11. To be more precise, the sum of 2,908 kronas and 35 fillérs was collected from primary school children. The amount was then sent to the royal school inspectors of each district by the deadline. See SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, f. 43. See the circular of 24 November, no. 7851.

12. *Transilvania, revista Asociațiunii pentru literatura română și cultura poporului român*, XLVI, 1–6 (July 1915): 83.

13. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1916, f. 4v. This was Circular no. 107/1916, issued during the consistorial assembly held in Blaj on 11 January 1916, whereby the ministerial rescript of 27 December 1915 was dispatched.

14. Blaga Mihoc, *Instituția eclezială*, 500–504.

systematic activity of collecting these plants.¹⁵ It was also suggested that school children could gather peach and plum kernels, as well as blister beetles (*cantharides*).¹⁶ Insistent reference was made to the need for collecting the largest possible amount of blackberry leaves for the army, very early in the year, in spring, when they were still tender. The ministerial order issued on 21 April 1916, reiterated in Archdiocesan Circular No. 2202 and other subsequent circulars of the same year, drew attention to the fact that it was important that blackberry leaves should not be mixed with other kinds, especially mandrake leaves, which were very similar, but highly dangerous, as they were poisonous. Recommendations were also made regarding the method of drying and preserving the leaves.¹⁷

Once the front needs had been ensured, some of these plants were to be put up for sale, the revenues obtained thus being channelled towards helping the widows and the orphans of the teachers and professors who had fallen on the battlefield.¹⁸ Moreover, since in the previous academic year (1915-1916), school children had collected a large quantity of blackberry leaves for the military, the surplus was sold and the Hungarian Minister of Religious Affairs allocated a sum of 11,482 kronas from the proceeds to the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church. Metropolitan Victor Mihályi mentioned this fact in Circular No. 2202/1916, specifying that the said sum – the outcome of the *spirit of sacrifice evinced by the schools* – would be used to help the orphans of the teachers who had died in the war.¹⁹

School headmasters were enjoined to coordinate their students and to get them involved in the activity of harvesting nettles, an extremely useful plant for the production of clothing fabrics. An illustrative example is Ministerial Order No. 10.051 of 8 August 1916, sent to the teachers and the school children in the archdiocese through Circular No. 4692-1916, which promised financial rewards for those who gathered a hundred kilograms of nettles. As greater incentives to the headmasters and the pupils, it was stipulated that those who harvested 100 kg of nettles and delivered them to the committee of village leaders (*antistie*) would receive 6 kronas, while the one in charge of those who harvested the 100 kg would receive, in turn, 2 kronas.²⁰ An order issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction on 11 November 1916, resumed and transmitted in the territory by the metropolitan consistory under Circular 6260/1916, underscore the dire lack of oil products. The problem had been brought to the attention of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction by the Minister of Agriculture, in a letter sent on 16 October 1916. Wishing to contribute to solving the problem, the Minister of Religious Affairs addressed himself both to the

15. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, f. 31.

16. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*.

17. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*.

18. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*.

19. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*.

20. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1916.

religious authorities and to the school directorates. The former were called upon to convey the request of the Minister to the forest owners, while the school headmasters were required to find ways to help forest the owners in the activity of harvesting mast. Beech mast could be used as a raw material for the production of oil.²¹

The family also contributed to the mobilization of children and to their involvement in supporting the war effort. The family actually represented the environment in which these children first got into contact with the painful effects of the war: the absence of the father, who had left for the front, the pressing need to take on multiple tasks in the household and the severe indigence they had to cope with. For instance, while boys were demanded to take over the chores that their fathers had once carried out, girls were required to help their mothers – who had meanwhile become “heads of the family” – in the household.

III. A “stolen childhood”: on children in times of war

A. Children as participants in the war effort

AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING conflagration like World War I was bound to completely ravage the universe of childhood. Nothing was as it had been before. The family, the school, the games and the activities children had previously engaged in – all these had changed because of the war. It is true that childhood experiences could be rather heterogeneous in Transylvania. There were, indeed, visible differences between the Romanian, the Saxon and the Hungarian children. These differences were, of course, entailed not only by their varying literacy levels, but also by the discrepancies between the welfare of various social categories. For a peasant’s child, the father’s departure for the front will undoubtedly have triggered not only an emotional, but also an economic crisis, since all agricultural activities had to be reconsidered and reorganized. For instance, when the father of a 12-13 year-old boy, who had never ploughed the fields before, got enrolled in the army, the youngster was forced to take over some of his father’s duties and to fill in his place whenever needed, sometimes performing difficult tasks that exceeded by far his physical abilities. Girls were also not exempt from strenuous activities. The daughters were now compelled to take on some of the activities that were previously carried out by their mothers, who had to take care of the infants and the elderly. Thus, like in the other belligerent states, the children in Transylvania experienced the war from a threefold position: not only as direct and indirect victims, but also as actors of the war.

The political and the ecclesiastical authorities adjusted their requirements according to the needs of the battle front and of the internal front as well. Thus,

21. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1917.



Photo 2. SJCJAN, fund: Collection – Letters from World War I

although at the beginning of each school year there were issued ministerial directives and recommendations relating to the obligation of children to attend school just like in normal times of peace, there were also amendments that nuanced their content. Circular No. 2630/1915 issued by the consistorial assembly held in Blaj on 24 August 1915 brought to the attention of the school headmasters the latest regulations on *The Attendance of People's Schools in the Academic Year 1915-1916*, included in Ministerial Order No. 7681 of 19 August 1915. This order stipulated that children enrolled in grades I-III had the obligation to attend school just *like in normal times* from the very beginning of the school year; however, third-graders were exempted, "lest the students of this class, who graduated the previous scholastic year, should waste one more whole year and hinder the progress of the others when, after the return to normal times, the people's education is to be regularly resumed, at all levels."²²

For the third – and fourth – grade students, for those who attended repetition schools and agricultural classes, the school year was shorter, lasting from 15 November to 15 April.²³ Students aged 9-14 years from the elementary, auxiliary and repetition schools could be granted by the local school authorities a *concession* from class attendance, allowing them to participate in the agricultural – industrial works, to carry out household chores and other tasks that served for war purposes. This provision, however, did not apply to fourth-sixth graders enrolled in day schools in the city: only in absolutely exceptional cases could they be exempted from attending school in the period between 15 November and 15 April (for the home economy, for agricultural works, guarding livestock, the house industry or for earning the daily bread of the family in case the father was deceased or gone to the front, the mother was ill, and there was no other person in the family who could do these things). In the case of the situations presented above and under altogether exceptional circumstances third-graders could be exempted from attending school throughout the entire academic year, provided they had a well-developed body.²⁴

Children, as evidenced by the situations we have described, were not only victims, but also actors, direct participants in the war, through the "responsibilities" or "occupations" they took on: gathering medicinal plants for those who needed them on the front, working in the fields or writing letters to those on the front or behind its lines. It is well known that there were many cases of families whose members could neither read, nor write and who resorted for help to the rare literate persons back home whenever they wished to write letters to their relatives on the front. Most often, these literate individuals included the children who had managed to graduate a few years of primary school and who could read the

22. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, f. 39r.

23. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*.

24. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, f. 39v.

letters arriving from the front. They also drafted the replies addressed to the soldiers: "The village is being emptied of people and filled with letters... Niculiță reads and writes letters to others too. The teacher speaks highly of him and the women buy him flat cake and sugar."

Regardless of the status of victims or actors that children in Transylvania assumed during World War I, their childhood was, indeed, *stolen* from them. Having had their innocence confiscated by the Great War, they felt impelled to surpass their limits and, thus, they grew up ahead of their time. When the war came to an end, these children accepted a twofold duty: on the one hand, preserving and honouring the memory of those who had fought in the war; on the other hand, participating, as adults, in the battles of World War II. This entire generation was doomed to experience the war and its atrocities twice: first as children and then as adults. *Children without a childhood and adults without youth!*

B. Children as victims

In Transylvania, poverty, famine and numerous other deprivations contributed to the children's status as direct victims of the war. Among those directly affected by the nefarious impact of the global conflagration was the historian David Prodan, who evoked, in his memoirs, the fact that "Hunger has remained more deeply imprinted in my memory than all my learning. Towards the end of the war, [the situation] had become atrocious... The holidays were generally longer, because of the lack of fuel, of food and the like."²⁵ As indirect victims, almost all the children in Transylvania saw one of their family members return home wounded or disabled from the front. Some of them lost their fathers or relatives in the vortex of the war.

Both the political and the ecclesiastical authorities endeavoured to find solutions that would lead to the improvement of the children's status. Here is, for instance, Circular No. 6794, issued in Blaj on 1 October 1914, in which Metropolitan Mihályi published, in fact, the order of 12 September 1914 received from the Subcommittee for the People's Welfare, which operated under the authority of the Regnicolar Committee for Army Assistance. This order stated that one of the problems addressed by this committee concerned the protection of children, ensuring that the children's best interest was defended properly in the families in which, pursuant to Article XI/1882, the head of the family, the provider, was serving in the army. This problem was rather acute, as attested by several "complaints" filed with this subcommittee in question and by a special situation that had emerged. This delicate situation regarded the fact that those modest families of peasants, whose members had so far lived primarily on the day-to-day earnings of the family head, were now left without their legal providers, who had been mobilized to the front, and were

25. David Prodan, *Memorii*, edited by Aurel Răduțiu (București: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1993), p. 29.

to receive a pension enabling them to subsist. These families were to receive a larger sum of money, accrued from the retroactive payment of the first instalment corresponding to the month of August and the instalment for the ongoing month at that time, September. The fear of those in the Subcommittee for the People's Welfare was that this amount, unusually large for modest families, who had never seen so much money at once, would be used without "caution and consideration." Accordingly, the subcommittee addressed itself to the central aid committees formed at the level of municipalities and, through them, to the local committees, requiring them to carry out checks to verify if an appropriate part of this state aid was used for the maintenance of children. Also, the local committees were asked to advise the public, "in persuasive words," to use these sums "with caution and consideration" and, to the extent that this was possible, to allocate a part to the banks ("let them allocate sums with interest until the end of the war"). Thus, the advice was that "the liberal aid from the state should not serve as a source for light and idle waste, should not cause slothfulness, but become grounds for a serious outlook on life, corresponding to these exceedingly serious times." The local committees were also entrusted with checking whether children were kept under appropriate moral supervision. Children were to remain in the care of their mothers in the first place, and if their mothers went to work, "the infants could be placed in day care homes."²⁶ Controls also had to determine the welfare of children who were left in the care of relatives, in their native villages or elsewhere, or of families "that are kind-hearted and have taken upon themselves their care." If children were found to have been abandoned, they were taken to the infants' asylums.²⁷

In fact, another ministerial rescript announced the fact that the *Katholikus Patronage Egysület* in Budapest had set the goal of taking care of the orphans of soldiers fallen in the war.²⁸ To this end, the Church administration was asked to communicate the following data: the number of orphaned children who were in the care of foreigners and could not be sheltered in their native places; all the trustworthy families that would take care of such orphans for free or in exchange for a small income.²⁹ An important step was made with the publication of the ministerial rescript of 18 February 1916, which recommended that the Orphans' Courts

26. Blaga Mihoc, *Instituția eclezială*, 493-494.

27. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1914, f. 55r.

28. The Catholic Patronage Association was founded by Bishop Alexander Pálffy in 1908 for the prevention of criminality among adults and young people. This association operated across the country, taking care of the young individuals who had committed crimes and of the adults who were released from prison, placing them under its control and supervision, providing them with support and finding them jobs. In 1915 it founded the Orphanage in Budapest, under its patronage. It resorted to the method of religious and moral education for achieving its goals; see *lexikon.katolikus.hu*.

29. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, f. 6. See also Circular no. 8856/1914, issued by the consistorial assembly held in Blaj on 26 January 1915.

in the country should set up, in their respective counties or municipalities, the institution of public patronage for the minor orphans of soldiers who had perished in the war. The rescript specified that this was a new institution with a humanitarian and patriotic purpose, which aimed to assist and ease, with advice, the task of legal guardians. In turn, under Circular No. 1664 of 3/16 May 1916, Metropolitan Victor Mihályi urged the clergy and the teachers to sign up their names on the lists of tutors and guardians in their parishes.³⁰ This appeal was resumed in Circular No. 1895, issued in Oradea Mare on 29 May 1917, which again called upon the priests, the teachers and the cantors – the “diligent believers” – to willingly take upon themselves “this honorary, charitable and patriotic task” and to appear before the conscription commission in the villages where they lived in order to be registered on the list of guardians for children orphaned by the war. The circular mentioned the fact that from the first call to the present one, the strategy of taking care of the war invalids, orphans and widows had been perfected. Thus, for this purpose, in compliance with the order issued by the presiding minister, No. 900 of 8 March 1917, there had been created a regional body of caregivers for the war victims, headed by a Regnicolar Council (*Országos hadigondozó tanács*), which exercised its power and duties through the National Military Welfare Office, directly subordinated to the Hungarian Prime Minister. This office oversaw the activity of the Municipal Committees of caregivers for the war victims, which, in turn, supervised the district and communal committees.³¹

In line with the ministerial directives and with the interest of the state bodies in providing protection to the orphaned children, the Archdiocesan Consistory of Blaj, sitting on 9/22 February 1916, decided the establishment of the Greek-Catholic Orphanage in Blaj for the children of “our sons fallen in the war.” The metropolitan’s explicit desire was that this home for orphans should be opened that very year and that it should provide shelter to Greek-Catholic orphans from around the country.³² The Orthodox Metropolitanate of Sibiu also launched the initiative of opening an orphanage under the patronage of its own Diocesan Consistory, no later than the autumn of the same year.³³ Moreover, starting from the year 1916, the entire Romanian elite and other social categories became

30. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1916, f. 33. See Circular 1664-1914.

31. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1917, 35-36.

32. SJAAN, fund: *The Greek-Catholic Parish of Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1916, f. 13. See Circular 942-1916.

33. Daniela Mârza, “Demografie și asistență socială în Transilvania (1916-1918): înființarea orfelinatelor destinate orfanilor de război” (hereinafter “Demografie și asistență socială”), in *Mișcări de populație și aspecte demografice în România în prima jumătate a secolului XX. Omagiu acad. Camil Mureșan la împlinirea vârstei de 80 de ani*, edited by Sorina Paula Bolovan, Ioan Bolovan, Rudolf Gräf, Corneliu Pădurean, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007), 94.

deeply involved in the campaign for protecting the orphans of war.³⁴ From Sibiu there was launched a public fundraising campaign for the establishment of an orphanage. Subsequently, Blaj had a similar initiative. Lists of public collections were opened and regularly published in the press. An examination of these lists reveals the solidarity of the Romanians, the power of empathy, the commitment of all social categories to this project, from the ecclesiastical elite to the lawyers, teachers, physicians, or to the simple peasants, students and the Romanian soldiers on the front.³⁵ The ever more numerous and serious concerns for the fate of these children was, of course, closely related to the growing number of war orphans. The number of Romanian children whose fathers were killed in battle during this period is still not known with certainty, but according to statistics conducted throughout Hungary in 1916, the number of war orphans was 36,379: 94.1% of these were in their mothers' care, 2.5% in that of guardians, 2.4% in that of relatives, and just 0.57% were in state-run foster homes, while 0.19% had been placed in the care of charity organizations.³⁶ If we consider that about 926,500 Romanian men were mobilized in the Austro-Hungarian Army in 1914-1918,³⁷ we can assume that the number of war orphans among Romanian children was significant.

Thus, World War I prompted the opening of the first Romanian orphanages destined for war orphans in Transylvania: the Orthodox Orphanage in Sibiu and the Greek-Catholic Orphanage in Blaj. Although the amounts deemed to be necessary for the opening of the two confessional Romanian orphanages had been gathered by the autumn of 1916 (500,000 kronas for the one in Sibiu and 400,000 kronas for the one in Blaj),³⁸ because of complications in the political situation and the opening of the front lines in southern Transylvania (due to Romania's entry into the war, which caused various other problems, including the refuge of the ecclesiastical authorities from Sibiu and Blaj to Oradea, etc.),³⁹ the two Romanian orphanages could not open their gates in 1916, as it had been expected. It only became possible to open and operate these Romanian orphanages in 1918. In Blaj, the orphanage was opened on 1 October, housing, at first, 50 boys,

34. D.Mârza, *Demografie și asistență socială în Transilvania*, 93.

35. D.Mârza, *Demografie și asistență socială în Transilvania*, 96.

36. D.Mârza, *Demografie și asistență socială în Transilvania*, 93.

37. Sorina Paula Bolovan, Ioan Bolovan, "Câteva aspecte economice din Primul Război Mondial reflectate în izvoarele statistice și în dialogul epistolar referitor la Transilvania," in *Economie și istorie. Dialog și interdisciplinaritate. În onoare prof. univ. dr. Ioan Lumperdean la împlinirea vârstei de 60 de ani*, edited by Dana Bako, Iosif Marin Balog, Rudolf Gräf, Răzvan V. Mustăță (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română/Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2015), 442.

38. D.Mârza, *Demografie și asistență socială în Transilvania*, 97. See also Ioan Bolovan, *Primul război mondial și realitățile demografice din Transilvania. Familie, moralitate și raporturi de gen* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Școala Ardeleană, 2015), 131-133.

39. See Mirela Popa-Andrei, Diana Covaci, *The Ecclesiastical Authorities' Refuge*, passim.

while the Sibiu orphanage became operational at around the same time, the buildings of the central school being used for this purpose.⁴⁰

This is how, through the consequences it entailed, the first global war led to the adoption of the first child protection measures, of course, primarily addressed to children who had been orphaned of their fathers. Even though they were insufficient at the time, such measures were absolutely necessary and represented a starting point in the democratic fight for defending the rights of children. These developments, as well as those referring to the status of children at the time of World War I certainly require increased attention on the part of researchers, especially since in the Romanian historiography devoted to the Great War, children and childhood represent, to this day, an almost non-existent topic. Their presence particularly on the domestic front of all the countries involved in the conflict demands a complete reassessment of the sources and a reconsideration of this theme alongside the major lines of research on the war. Our study is only a preliminary research on this topic, intending to bring to the historians' attention the urgent need to address and analyse the situation of children in Transylvania during the war. This situation needs to be seen and read from a twofold perspective: both in terms of their status as "innocent victims" (a perspective that has, to some extent, been approached in historiography) and from the standpoint of the role they played as local protagonists of and witnesses to the conflict. Just like in Western Europe, the children in Transylvania formed a mobilizing and mobilized social category. All the key channels were used to support the mobilization of children: the school, the family, religion, games, books, etc. In any case, it should be noted that children were not only recipients of this mobilizing discourse, but also a category directly involved in providing for the needs of the military who fought on the front. This is attested by the "responsibilities" or the "occupations" assumed by children during the war years, from their everyday chores in the village farmsteads to drafting letters for those who were on the front and behind it and to harvesting medicinal plants for the soldiers, etc. All these facets of childhood in belligerent times reveal the fact that, just like in other areas affected by the war, the children in Transylvania were direct and indirect victims, but also active actors of the world conflagration, which left an indelible mark on their lives after the war.

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40. D.Mârza, *Demografie și asistență socială în Transilvania*, 97.

AND THERE WAS STILL WAR

Transylvania in 1915

between Propaganda and Donations



VALERIA SOROȘTINEANU

Abstract

During the 1915 it had become clear that the war was far from a brief interlude before peace conferences. Just as the front dramatic episodes of the combats were running quickly, beginning to turn slowly into real massacres, those left home had to conduct their own war, caring for those sent to the front or weights more visible. The Austro-Hungarian state authorities established, as they have once established that the Romanians in Transylvania, who had given the highest number of soldiers, could be encouraged to express their faith to the Throne and Homeland, by appealing to the two Romanian Churches, the Orthodox, and, respectively, the Greek-Catholic. The present study was conducted by analysing the way in which one of the churches, the Orthodox one, represented by the Orthodox Metropolitan of Sibiu reacted with believers of the same confession from Transylvania towards the official policy to support the war waged by the authorities, through propaganda and the requested donations. Collections and donations were, in fact, the main grievance of the civil and military authorities, being not only strictly necessary, but also a proof of patriotism, while the departed front donations in money or goods were, after all, hope that helps loved ones in war.

Keywords

City, army, families, soldiers, hospital, victory

THE SARAJEVO assassination of 28th June 1914 and the entrance in the First World War would give the Austro-Hungarian state the long awaited opportunity to limit the ambitions of the Southern Slavs, by giving Serbia a lesson worthy of remembering. Even more, politically speaking, by punishing those responsible for the assassination, Austro-Hungary would secure a favourable order in the Balkans and surpass Russian influence in the region.

In Austria-Hungary, in a much more visible manner than in Russia, the problem of the Empire's nations was already debated in the political circles of Vienna and Budapest, however, without a concrete result. In Transylvania and Banat, at that time belonging to Hungary, there was a certain dialogue between the Romanian elite and the authorities, but it completely lacked efficiency, the sole reason for this being the inner resolution of prime minister Tisza Istvan to pursue one goal, i.e. reinforcing, through any means, Hungary's position inside the dualist state.

On the one hand, completely unimpressed by Romania's adherence to an alliance with Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy in 1883, on the other hand, eager to continue the politics of magyarization in their part of the Empire, Tisza Istvan, prime minister of Hungary between 1903 and 1905 and 1913 and 1917, imposed a postulate: the Romanians had never excelled, they were not excelling at that time, and they would never excel in being loyal to the Hungarian homeland. At a later date, the authorities in Budapest were forced, under pressure from the German diplomacy, to initiate further negotiations with the P.N.R. representatives, inducing in Vienna the image that a reconciliation with the Romanian elite is possible "on the fly", since the Romanians were promised a relaxation of the educational legislation.

However, in the first years of the conflict, the Romanians' behaviour in general (we refer here not only to those who left for the battlefield in great numbers, but also to the Romanian society as a whole) conformed with the received orders, or as Sextil Pușcariu mentioned in his memoirs, "the sense of duty" was present.

Internally, apart from what was officially declared to the diplomatic chancelleries, especially for the ears of the diplomats in Romania, whose entrance into the war was expected by the Hungarians, the authorities always showed mistrust and behaved in a manner that, in the end, lead to an opposite outcome to what was pursued. Minor satisfaction was given to the Romanians who were drafted, such as the allowance to wear the national Romanian colours or to sing "Deșteaptă-te române!" ("Awaken thee, Romanian!"). The conscription orders were also published in Romanian, for the first time after 1867, as the reason behind the call to arms seemed justified, including for those who were drafted: vengeance for the assassination of the throne's heir, archduke Franz Ferdinand, who had given high hopes to the Romanians as well¹.

1. Liviu Maior, *Românii din armata habsburgică*, [Romanians in the Habsburg army] (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), 171-187.

In less than a year, wearing the Romanian national colours on the battlefield was considered a display of rebellion and an insult by any Hungarian officer and was severely punished by the Honvéd regiments. While, at the beginning of 1915, one of the leaders of the Romanian elite, an intimate of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, noticed what he called “a calming of the spirits”, after Italy joined the Entente on 23rd May 1915, on the internal front, numerous accusations towards the elite, regarding their lack of loyalty, demonstrated the true nature of the authorities’ attitude, eased only by the German diplomacy’s indications, who did not want to give Romania any reason to refuse participation in the war on the side of the Central Powers ².

The Archdiocese of Sibiu, part of the Orthodox Archdiocese, had been the most important and well organized from the region. However, its geographical position near the Romania’s border, even before Romania had entered the war, had determined the officials of the dualist state to watch the local inhabitants with great distrust and suspicion.

However, it would be incomplete not to mention also the fact that, for some leaders of the national Romanian movement after 1910, the problem of the Romanians living in the dualist state could only be solved through Romania’s intervention, in the context of the international conflict, and victory was regarded, perhaps in a superficial manner, as easily obtainable. For example, Octavian Goga, who left for Romania in 1914, chose to openly fight against Austria-Hungary and his efforts to organize the Romanian legion in Italy, during the course of the year 1915, are well-known, just like Onisifor Ghibu, a school teacher in Sibiu, and priest Ioan Moța from Orăștie who were fired after they left the country for Romania.

Fears rose also because of the great numbers of the defectors, which became obvious starting with the year 1915, their numbers being estimated at approximately 20,000, although many of them were already in Russia or Italy. Moreover, at the border with Romania, an area which comprised two of Transylvania’s important cities, Sibiu and Brașov, Romania and Austria-Hungary both organized a series of propaganda operations, although few of the actions undertaken by the Romanian kingdom were proved in time. The minister of Hungarian Internal Affairs requested by a telegram, sent on 27th July 1915 to all the county chiefs, but especially to the heads of Brașov and Sibiu, to fight against the distribution of maps displaying Greater Romania and against the instilling of a defeatist state of spirit amongst the Romanian soldiers, that would lead to defections in the prospect of a “Romanian invasion”³.

2. L. Maior, *Românii din armata habsburgică*, 171-187.

3. Constantin Voicu, *Biserica strămoșească din Transilvania în lupta pentru unitatea spirituală și națională a poporului român*, [The National Church in Transylvania in the struggle for spiritual and national unity of the Romanian people] (Sibiu: Editura Tipografiei Arhidiecezane, 1985), 156.

Just before the implementation of censorship, Teodor V. Păcățian, the editor-in-chief of *Telegraful Român*, was summoned by the Bureau of censorship of the Military Commandment from the 12th Army Corps (run between 1911-1914 by general Herman Kövess de Kövessháza and between 1915-1917, by division general, Victor von Njiegovan), along with the other editors of the local press. *Telegraful Român* became controlled by military censorship, and beginning with 10th August 1914, the newspapers' content needed approval from the military commandment, which at that time, had its headquarters on Heltauergasse no.6 (nowadays Nicolae Bălcescu street), at the first floor (room no. 77).

Another address from 19th August 1914, sent this time by the county magistrate, contained exact instructions of what was to be considered eligible for publishing. The priority was the strict distribution of news according to the official military narrative. The movement of military troops could not be covered by the media without approval from the Ministry of Defence, or from the Prime-Minister's cabinet.

Much attention was given to news that could induce panic in the community, here being included various social phenomena: diseases, bank bankruptcy, and other. News regarding the confiscating of good belonging to foreign citizens was also forbidden⁴.

Since the end of 1914 and the beginning of 1915, appeals had been made to the population to help the provision of the army with clothing suited for winter. An address issued by the Military Commandment from Sibiu dates from this period, in which people were asked to provide for the purchase of as many sheep skins for the making of bodices, or "peptare", as they were called back then. Centres of collecting these skins would be organized in Alba Iulia, Cluj, Sibiu and Brașov. 12 crowns would be paid for each piece. The whole action was to be terminated until the 20th October 1914. The reason being, as mentioned, the need for winter clothing; the Military Commandment observed that this kind of clothes were very useful on the battle front, at least for the Romanian soldiers.

Apart from the political and military aspects of the First World War, equally important was also what had happened on the home front, that of the civilian society, in its whole. Through its effects, duration and amplitude of military operations, the First World War compelled all the participating forces, both those from the Central Powers' bloc and from the Entente, to make great efforts, not only on the battlefield, but also behind it, therefore the home front's importance is not to be neglected.

In recent years and especially in the context of commemorating a century from the beginning of the First World War, the European historiography, and not only,

4. Biblioteca Astra Sibiu, [Astra Sibiu County Library], Fondul T.V.Păcățian, [T.V.Păcățian Fund], 1914, File 14/186, Biblioteca Astra Sibiu, [Astra Sibiu County Library], Fondul T.V.Păcățian, [T.V.Păcățian Fund], 1914, File 2015.

has understood the necessity to bring contributions to the new approaches to this conflict by relating to the studies regarding family life, the demographic evolutions, or the new concept of humanitarianism developed by the Christian churches, in an effort to stabilize the home front and to make bearable the efforts required by the war⁵.

For this reason I tried to present, for the year 1915, what it meant to respond to everything that the war required from the Romanian society in Transylvania, from the elite to those who had been forgotten in their native villages from where they were conscripted.

Some inevitable elements had appeared in the rural context: financial troubles, illegitimate relationships, and the great number of taxes for the authorities, the Red Cross and the two Romanian Churches, and epidemics, which had been also present behind the lines of the front, causing an impressive number of victims.

Once some fronts had been established, especially in 1915, the families had benefited by the presence and help of those who were to leave for the battlefield, as many of them had received the permission to help their families at the agricultural works. Some teachers had been allowed to come back to school, where they had been the single support of the pupils' parents.

The activity of the confessional schools was important in 1915 so that we may mention the educational report no. 9655/06 08 1915 concerning the priests' important role in managing the schools. Alternative education was imposed, as the substitutes of the teachers were the priests, while the pupils of the 4th, 5th and 6th grades were officially allowed to be absent from school to replace the working force in agriculture. The sources used were: the Romanian press, "Telegraful Român" and "Transilvania", The Archdiocese of Sibiu Archive, the Consistory Fund, the Astra County Library in Sibiu, special collections, T.V. Păcățian fund.

From the beginning it should be mentioned that the distinction between propaganda and donation was made, in many cases, with quite some difficulty, for the simple reason that they were complementary. Regarding the propaganda used during the course of year 1915, it can be stated that it was all the more necessary as, starting with the mentioned year, it became obvious that the war would not end very soon and the families of those who were drafted started to feel more and more impoverished in their everyday lives.

Propaganda has resulted in numerous initiatives of the authorities of which we can mention: the popularization of the official paintings of the two emperors allies, Francis-Joseph and Wilhelm II, a number of paintings of military scenes, symbolizing the alliance of the two armies, Austro-Hungarian and German, recovery,

5. Ioan Bolovan, *Primul război mondial și realitățile demografice din Transilvania. Familie, moralitate și raporturi de gen*, [World War I and the demographic realities of Transylvania. Family, Morality and Gender Relations], (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Școala Ardeleană, 2015), 126-137.

as donations of biographies of characters of the imperial family, popular in the Hungarian dualist state, as Archduke Joseph as subscriptions of the Ministry Honved, meaning of the defence from the Hungarian dualist state⁶.

The image of the military victory was often interposed to the daily life of the civilians, with its privations. For example, in Sibiu, the military victories were presented in every detail in the press of the city. In January in the Big Square of the city there were exposed Russian and Serbian cannons⁷.

On 30th July 1914, most probably at the request of the government, the authorities in Sibiu signed an appeal calling all members of society to help the families of those who had members on the battle front. The appeal was signed by many local officials: Karl Egon von Hohenlohe from the Catholic Church, Stefan von Kedres, financial director and ministry adviser, Ștefan Szentimrei, director of the state gymnasium from Sibiu, Bishop Friederich Teutsch from the Lutheran Church, Karl Wolf, bank director and member of the House of Magnates and Daniel Czekelius, the city official physician. For the Orthodox Church signed: Archbishop Ioan Mețianu, Partenie Cosma, director of the Albina Bank, and Ioan de Preda, the Orthodox Archbishopric's lawyer. An interesting phrase from this document states that: "As the love for the homeland gave those who left the courage to fight on the battle front, so do we, who stayed behind, have to show the same love and devotion to sacrifice"⁸.

Due to the fact that the trust of the population in the victories of the army XII, with the headquarters in Sibiu had to be maintained, on the one hand, and the material sacrifices of the population had to be motivated, on the other hand, the last 3 military commanders of this army – baron Pflanzer-Baltin, Herman Kovess von Kovesshaza and Victor Njegovan – were on the front, as well as the general Arthur Arz von Straussenburg. All of them were awarded the distinction of honourable inhabitants of the city.

In the same way, Regiment no. 31 of infantry, consisting mainly of Romanians from the Sibiu County, was notable for its contribution to the victory in Mitrovita, Serbia. In 1915, the biggest celebrated victory was on 27th June 1915, the one concerning the re-occupation of Lemberg. On this occasion, Sibiu was decorated with flags, while the military music walked through the main streets of the city. In the Big Square the royal and the German hymn was sung, the bells of the church-

6. Arhiva Arhiepiscopiei Sibiu [The Archdiocese of Sibiu Archive], *Fond Consistoriu* [Consistory Fund], I, 52, 1915, address official address nr. 3609, 1915, official address nr. 675/ 1915, I, 51, 1915, 51, 1915, IV, 187, 1915.

7. *Telegraful Român*, [The Romanian Telegraph] 1 (1915): 3; Sigerus Emil, *Cronica orașului Sibiu, 1100-1929*, cu 7 ilustrații și 6 planuri ale orașului, [Sibiu Chronicle, 1100-1929, with seven illustrations and six plans of the city] (Sibiu, Ed. Honterus, 2011), 69.

8. Biblioteca Astra Sibiu, [Astra Sibiu County Library], *Fondul T.V. Păcățian*, [T.V. Păcățian Fund], 1914, File 2013.

es marked for hours this victory, and in the evening the inhabitants could hear the military music again. Some houses were illuminated until late at night⁹.

For the Orthodox believers in Transylvania and Banat, the Metropolitan bishop Ioan Metianu, as one of the tolerated representatives of the Romanian elite, had worked hard in Budapest and Vienna to prove the Romanians' loyalty towards the Habsburg house. In most of the cases, Metianu urged the believers through his messages (sermons and reports) to prove their loyalty and the soldiers to fight bravely to avenge the death of the archduke Franz-Ferdinand in a war, considered rightful.

Metropolitan Metianu exhorted the priests of the Sibiu Cathedral to encourage those who were leaving for the front through sermons and confessions, to be close to them and to those who remained at home. We mention the report no. 7964 Bis. in 1915, where Metianu expressed his regret that the war went on and imposed a prayer that was to be read at every religious service until the end of the war¹⁰.

Representatives of the Orthodox Church disproved the financial exploit of the believers through trading books of prayers with magical powers that protected the soldier from the "fire of the enemy". In 1915 a prayer book was mentioned - *Rugăciune folositoare. Epistolă cerească. Epistola de la casa lui Christos (Useful Prayer. Heavenly Epistle. Epistle from Christ's House)* – that had a different content from the teachings of the Orthodox Church, thought to have magical powers and sent by God and archangel Gavril in Königsberg city. It was written that "whoever has the book, will be protected from bullets, and who doesn't believe it, put it on a dog's neck and shoot, because the bullet will fail". The book was bought by many believers, especially by mothers to send it to the front for their sons. The report of the Metropolitan Ioan Metianu no. 7362/11 08 1915 forbids every Orthodox believer to buy this book and recommends, on the other hand, the book of Orthodox prayers - *Părți alese (Selected Fragments)* – with fragments from the Old and New Testament¹¹.

The activity of the confessional schools was important in 1915 so that we may mention the educational report no. 9655/06 08 1915 concerning the priests' important role in managing the schools. Alternative education was imposed, as the substitutes of the teachers were the priests, while the pupils of the 4th, 5th and 6th grades were officially allowed to be absent from school to replace the working force in agriculture.

9. *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], 96 (1915): 249, *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], 121 (1915): 487, *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], 62 (1915): 249.

10. Biblioteca Județeană Astra Sibiu [Astra Sibiu County Library] Fondul T.V.Păcățian, [T.V.Păcățian Fund], 1914, File 2013.

11. Arhiva Arhiepiscopiei Sibiu [The Archdiocese of Sibiu Archive], *Fond Consistoriul* [Consistory Fund], I 198, 1915, Arhiva Arhiepiscopiei Sibiu [The Archdiocese of Sibiu Archive], *Fond Consistoriul* [Consistory Fund], III, 272, 1915.

On the subject of the pre-military preparation of pupils from gymnasium we have reports from the Romanian gymnasium in Brasov, according to the reference of the headmaster, dr. Virgil Onitiu, and the report addresses to the pastoral conference on 2nd May 1916, written by one of the teachers responsible with the military instruction, dr. Ioan Bunea. These were the instructors: dr. Ioan Bunea, Nicolae Bogdan for the theory and practice, and Petru Rosca for gymnastics, Gheorghe Baiulescu for hygiene. There were some difficulties in translating some terms from German to Romanian, especially due to the lack of textbooks. The instruction was made in 3 languages: Romanian for explanations, German and Hungarian for commanding. The group with maximum of pupils, established by the Ministry, was 60, among which: 17 were pupils from the 6th grade, 34 from the 7th grade, and 9 from the 8th grade. Dr. Ioan Bunea prepared a booklet that contained all the basic notions for the process: from the army organization, equipment, reports, marches on the field, reading the military maps, conventional signs, shelters, service of the stages with technical terms in 3 languages. According to Bunea, “the turbid times we experience had shown the need for these exercises, which are welcomed. We need good soldiers and the military instruction is going to be accessible, especially due to the fact that from school they are going directly under the flag”¹².

The **Astra** association launched an appeal to the families who had Astra members dead on the battle front, to help with the gathering of data for an album called *The album of heroes from 1914 and 1915*, an album which would be kept in the Association's headquarters. In order to help Romanian soldiers, members from this association donated several books, ABCs for the illiterate soldiers: 20 books were sent to Brunn, 40 to the wounded kept in a hospital in Alba Iulia, 50 for the illiterate soldiers in Budapest, and from the collection destined for *The popular library* in: Aiud, Pest, Vienna, Prague, Sibiu, Munkacs, Pardubice, their total value reaching 1954 crowns and 70 forints¹³.

However, on 27th July 1915, the minister of internal affairs asked the rulers of Brasov and Sibiu County to stop the spreading of some maps with the Great Romania and a possible state of mind in the case of Romanian soldiers that would lead to desertion awaiting a “Romanian invasion”. The first praetor from Miercurea-Sibiului announced his superior about the existence of some clandestine warehouses of arms, organized by Romanians on the territory. The chief of the frontier police, Imre Homer, complained in the secret report no. 481 of 23/12/1915 on the Romanian state of mind, being sure that after the Russian army attack, “Romania is going to come against us”. At the beginning of the war, there was a rumour in the Romanian villages that Russia had attacked Romania and invaded Moldova¹⁴.

12. Arhiva Arhiepiscopiei Sibiu, *Fond Consistoriul*, 479, III, 1915, 407, III, 1915, 364, IV, 1915.

13. *Transilvania* (1915): 1-6, 84, 96.

14. Constantin Voicu, *Biserica strămoșească din Transilvania în lupta pentru unitatea spirituală și națională a poporului român*, [The National Church in Transylvania in the struggle for spiri-

The vicar Patriciu Pintea from Cata/Archpriestship Cohalm was arrested at home, because he was mentioned in the letters of a former teacher from the parish, who left for Romania. The vicar escaped imprisonment only due to the archpriest's intervention. He was accused of *antipatriotic acts* and he was allowed to participate only at funerals. That is why Pintea asked for a substitute, but the Consistory considered that it was better that way, as another priest could complicate matters.

The teacher Romul Cristoloveanu, headmaster of the school in Rasnov, as well as the headmaster of the school in Zarnesti, Pompiliu Dan, were accused of *espionage* in October 1915. Both of them were imprisoned in the military prison of Cluj, where they were still kept in July 1918 with no accusations read.

The clerks of the state became rigorous in respecting the order of the minister of internal affairs, which forbade any type of public assembly with no approval. For example, the priest George Sovrea from Calbor/Archpriestship Cohalm sent a letter to the Consistory, in which he showed that the approval for the parish committee sessions, although requested in advance, came always later; moreover, the notary of the village accused him of defeatism, because "he performed religious services for people and consoled those who left for war"¹⁵.

The entire Orthodox Archdiocese of Transylvania organized collections of money, clothes or food products. The most important institutions that supervised the activity were: the Red Cross, the Ministry of internal affairs, and the aid section within the Hungarian Territorial Army, The Reunion for aid at war. The collection of clothes and money made it to the front or materially supported the orphans, the war widows, the invalids, while the food products were directed mainly to the military hospitals.

The report no. 6371/1915 of 1st July 1915 was the result of a request no. 1099 of the Reunion for aid at war on 27th July 1915 regarding the commemoration of the archduke Franz-Ferdinand through special requiem masses. And there was another request of the Section of aid from the Hungarian Territorial Army on July, 2 1915 so that in Sibiu there would be a single collection, after the report would be read in church. Only 16 collections were sent out of 34 archpriestships in the year 1915. In the most important archpriestships, we mention the following important activities:

– Archpriestship of Medias: Money was sent for the front (rose even from the school), clothes and food to the hospitals in Medias and Sighisoara, in agri-

tual and national unity of the Romanian people] (Sibiu: Editura Tipografiei Arhiepiscopale, 1985): 156.

15. Mihai Racovițan, Pamfil Matei, *Sibiul și Marea Unire* [Sibiu and the Great Union] (Sibiu: Casa de presă și editură Tribuna, 1993), 145-147; *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], 116 (1915): 467; Arhiva Arhiepiscopiei Sibiu, *Fond Consistoriul*, 458, III, 1915, 480, III, 1915, 610, IV, 1915, 214, III, 1915.

cultural works the inhabitants helped each other; the priest gave his low to the poorest woman in the village.

- Archpriestship of Hateg: 2400 crowns were collecting by the Red Cross and the city hall, the Society of mines from Vulcan and the Red Cross from Petrosani were also involved, and those who didn't have money, helped in agricultural works.

- Archpriestship of Miercurea: collecting were done by the city hall, church, boards of Romanians and Saxons, a special role played by the locale elite and in some of the most important parishes, were collected 1000 crowns in Ludoș and 10158 crowns in Rod.

- Archpriestship of Fagaras: the Collection was done by the city and village halls., Winter clothes were donated for the soldiers, linen for the wounded, and 16271 crowns for the wounded soldiers.

- Archpriestship of Brasov: Many collections for the Red Cross were made with the help of the Women's Reunions, city and village halls, in the parish of Halchiiu, 22 pupils bought commemorative medals with the portrait of the emperor Franz-Joseph and emperor of Germany, Wilhelm II. In Brasov were made so many collecting that the value is unknown.

- Archpriestship of Reghin: all priests and teachers were members of the Red Cross and collected for the hospitals in Toplita Română, Reghin, Gurghiu, Mures-Osorhei and Cluj, 300 crown were sent to the Red Crescent in Turkey, for Christmas presents the money were sent through inspectors to the competent forum, 300 crowns were donated for the New Year celebration for widows and orphans, several hundreds of crowns for the blind soldiers, 300 crowns for the war prisoners, collected by the city and village halls, and other hundred crowns collected for the orphan children.

The press noted that the collections were required almost daily so that "our poor people gave almost everything. It is known that some collections didn't reach the destination, but the people contribute gladly to such collections"¹⁶.

A report written by Sergiu Medean, archpriest from Sebes, praising priest Constantin Oancea from Cioara de jos/Archpriestship Sebes, who gathered with his wife 4 carts for the front: linen, food, 205 big breads, over 1000 eggs, most of them sent to the hospitals in Alba-Iulia, while the money was sent to the front. The priest performed a requiem at the monastery of monk Sofronie, Cioara, for those who died in battle.

The vicar from Smig/Archpriestship Sibiu, Radu Marcovici, in his report 21.11. 1015 promised a collection, but his believers mentioned the fact that they had their orphans "who freeze on the streets in winter".

16. Arhiva Arhiepiscopiei Sibiu, *Fond Consistoriul*, III, 38, 1915, 56, III, 1915, 74, III, 1915, 323/ 1915, P. Mediaș, III, 720, 1915, Pp. Miercurea, III, 75, 1915, Pp. Brașov, III, 114, 1915, Herman, III, 1915, 77, Feldioara, III, 54, 1915, Brașovul vechi, III, 87, 1915, Brașov, III, 73, 1915, Purcăreni, III, 115, 1915, parohia Hălchiiu/Pp. Brașov, 38, III, 7121, 292/ 1915, Pp. Reghin.

In 1915, the members of the *Astra* association contributed to the state loan for war with 13000 crowns, to the collection of the Red Cross and the Iron Soldier with 100 crowns.

A special case was the one of Partenie Cozma, executive director of the biggest bank with Romanian capital in Transylvania – Albina Bank. The director of this bank was informed that it was possible that Romania would enter the war on Antanta's side and retired in 1915, fleeing for the Romanian Kingdom with his family. The authorities used the order given by the Hungarian Ministry of internal affairs on 29th November 1915, and, although under the police surveillance, Albina Bank contributed to all 7 loans of war that the dualist state made during the war of total value of 3,800,000 crowns, and for the deponents the total donated sum of 5,603,400 crowns. Moreover, credits were given to Sibiu, Tarnava Mica counties, towns Medias, Sibiu, and Sadu for food purchases¹⁷.

The most interesting way of fund raising was the so-called **Iron Soldier**. This type of fund raising was imposed as a model by the German background, under a double and long lasting influence of the medieval chevalier, who fights bravely for a noble cause. On the other hand, it comes from another influence, given by the image of the glorious general Paul von Hindenburg, whose statue of 14 metres, raised until 1919 near the Victory Column in Berlin, offered, at least at the beginning, a manifestation of the desire for victory of the German nation rather than the motivation of fund raising for those severely wounded, as it evolved afterwards.

Initially it consisted of a wooden skeleton, which represented a medieval knight, dressed in iron by thousands of simple or covered in gold nails. This motif of the medieval knight or of the military man in general was very popular in the Dualist Monarchy and in the German state, and it often took the form of the Iron Cross.

The actions, besides raising funds, were directed towards the implementation in the people's minds of "the feeling of sacrifice for future generations, to keep in memory the names of those who perished and worked for the entire war effort.

For the Dualist State, these iron soldiers were mentioned in all big cities from the German part, but this model became popular in the Hungarian part, too. In Austro-Hungary, the first iron soldier was inaugurated in Vienna, on 6th March 1915. It was followed by several other initiatives of this sort in many other German speaking areas. Later, an iron soldier representing a knight from Matthias Corvinus's time was erected in Budapest, in Deak Ferenc square, in the presence of Archduke Charles-Stephan and archduchess Augusta. More iron soldiers were inaugurated in Szeged and Székesfehérvár, Arad, Braşov, Cluj, and Odorheiu Secuiesc, Rădăuţi, and Cernăuţi¹⁸.

17. *Telegraful Român*, 29 (1915): 116; 92 (1915): 371; 3, (1915): 11; *Transilvania*, 1-6 (1915): 92, *Telegraful Român* 104 (1915): 419, Mihai Drecin, *Banca „Albina” din Sibiu. Instituție națională a românilor transilvăneni*, [“Albina “bank from Sibiu. A Romanian national institution (1871-1918)] (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1982), 209-213.

18. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nail_Men, accessed in 12 08 2015.

In Cluj, the iron soldier was named *Santinela Carpaților* (*Sentinel of the Carpathians*) and it was inaugurated on 18th August 1915. The Romanian community was represented at the event by the Orthodox priest Tului Roșescu and by the Greek-Catholic priest Elie Dăianu¹⁹. The Iron Soldier from Odorheiu Secuiesc was inaugurated on 8th December 1917 in the honour of the 82nd regiment, known also as *Secuiul de fier* (*The Iron Szekely*).²⁰

We have to admit that in Sibiu the initiative belonged to General Victor Njegovan, commander of Army XII of Sibiu between 1914-1916, raising from soldiers on the front the sum of 9200 crowns. It is obvious that there was a double motivation: to raise funds and to keep in the memory of people, as it was mentioned in the Romanian newspaper *Telegraful Român* of Sibiu, « the feeling of sacrifice for the future generations so that the name of those who lived would be kept, of those who worked and especially contributed to taking care of the disabled during the world war ». Initially built of wood, the skeleton of the soldier was covered in iron by beating simple nails or nails covered with gold or silver.

The statue was inaugurated on 1st August 1915 and was placed in the Main Market, afterwards being moved to Mihail Brekner's store. At this festivity, after the military parade and speeches held by General Njegovan and county magistrate Frederich Walbaum, the first nails were put in place in the name of Emperor Francisc-Iosif and prime-minister Tisza Iosif. In the honorary committee were present, among others, Bishop of the Lutheran Church, D. F. Teutsch, General Victor Njegovan, the Roman-Catholic vicar, Prince Egon von Hohenlohe, the head of Sibiu County, Walbaum, vice-magistrate Fabritius, dr. Ioan Stroia, Archpriest of Sibiu, in the name of Archbishop Ioan Mețianu, mayor Albrecht Dörr and several other representatives from different associations based in Sibiu. The Romanian flag waved on several buildings in the city, such as the houses of Ilie Beu and Nicolae Ittu, two renowned Romanian physicians in that time, as it did near the newly displayed statue.

Also, due to propaganda and fund raising motifs, the image of the Iron soldier was reproduced on a series of illustrations. The campaign raised up to 41,000 crowns, and ended in 1916. The Romanian community managed to create itself a hard-earned respected image among the German inhabitants of Sibiu, by clerical and secular elites from different institutions which helped build a national image. From the 19 deputies of the county gathering of Sibiu, many were clerics revolving around the Orthodox Archbishopric: Archbishop Ioan Mețianu, priest Ioan Baptist Boiu, the archbishopric jurist, Ioan de Preda, T.V. Păcățianu, editor-in-chief of *Telegraful Român*, Ilie Beu, the Theological-Pedagogical Institute physician, Partenie Cosma, director of Albina Bank and Marcu Joantea, a wealthy landowner²¹.

19. "Inaugurare" [Opening], *Telegraful Român*, 91 (1915): 367; *Telegraful Român*, 114 (1915): 459.

20. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nail_Men, accessed in 12 08 2015.

21. *Telegraful Român*, 125 (1915): 503; 104 (1915): 419.

The entire activity of fund raising took place in 1915-1917. For Banat were mentioned initiatives such as: in Arad, a knight inaugurated in 1915, in Oradea an iron soldier, named the *Keeper from Isonzo*, raised on 17th July 1917 in front of the city hall.

In Bucovina, the preferred model was an eagle: in Chernivtsi, the monument was erected in June 1916 and symbolized the liberation from Russians, who, in the moment of conquering the city, took off the imperial eagle on the city hall. Similar monuments were raised in Vatra Dornei, Radauti, and Campulung.

The fate of these monuments was given by the following evolution of military and political events, and according to bibliographical sources, they were destroyed by Romanian troops during 1919, except for the iron knight from Sibiu, which is kept in the courtyard of the history museum, within the Brukenthal National Museum Complex²².

The propaganda activity managed to support the collection for those on the front and for their families due to message and organization. Propaganda and fund raisings were a common effort and they were well organized by including the entire society. Finding a motivation for all the war efforts was the most challenging aspect, especially in the light of the war events and the lack of any victory until 1915.

22. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nail_Men, accessed in 12 08 2015.

"BY WORD AND EXAMPLE"

Mobilizing People through the Circulars Issued by the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church in Transylvania (1915)

■

DIANA COVACI

Abstract

In his 2012 book on the United Kingdom's propaganda during WWI, David Monger emphasized the particularities of this action, and stressed that it had combined in unique ways national patriotism, the belief in God, and the civilizing mission of the English nation. Propaganda existed long before WWI, but during 1914 and 1918 it achieved many of its present-day features.

In my study I intend to emphasize some aspects concerning the propaganda deployed through the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church in Transylvania, namely the reinforcement of the combative spirit among civilians during WWI. By 1915 it became obvious for the leaders of the belligerent states that the war was going to go on for a long time. The main issues to be addressed were the human and material losses, as well as maintaining the population's morale. The Hungarian State's Propaganda deployed through churches was organized in order to counteract those issues.

The sources of the study were mainly the circular letters issued between 1914 and 1918 by the ecclesiastical authorities of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church. I have used mainly the historical reconstruction, but also discourse analysis and media studies methods, in order to emphasize the means of WWI propaganda.

I intend to analyze the messages, the means of publication, and some of the effects of the propaganda from the pulpit, focusing on 1915, the year when it became clear that peace was a distant prospect. The clergymen played an essential role in the consolidation of patriotism during the war, considering the fact that all the armies were invoking God's support. Moreover, the circular letters contained precise messages, special requests, were demanding requisitions and donations for the Hungarian State and the Emperor. The clergymen mobilized the believers into contributing to the war effort, while trying to take care of the religious needs of the flock.

Keywords

World War One, Mobilization, Circular letters, Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, War loans

Introduction

THIS STUDY is part of a larger research project dedicated to the propaganda conducted by the Hungarian State through the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church in Transylvania in 1914-1918. The project coordinated by Ana Victoria Sima analyzes the state propaganda and the involvement of the Romanian Churches in Transylvania in the mobilization of the population during World War I.¹ The research is still at the beginning, so this study offers the possibility of a preliminary application of the findings on the subject of the control the state exerted over its citizens and the mobilization activities it carried out during that period of crisis.

The study is divided into two complementary parts: the first one undertakes a quantitative analysis: it circumscribes the sample of documents that formed the basis of the study and examines the communication models identified in these documents. The second part of the paper focuses on the qualitative analysis of the messages in the circulars, in other words, of the orders propagated by the civil authorities through the church, with particular emphasis on several case studies.

For the analysis of the propaganda carried out by the Hungarian State, I have selected a specific category of sources, namely ecclesiastical circular letters. These circulars were the means by which the decisions of the ecclesiastical administration were communicated from the diocesan center across the territory of its jurisdiction. At the beginning of the 19th century, circulars were sent to the headquarters of each deanery in the diocese. From there, they were dispatched to every parish in the deanery in order to be communicated by the priests to the faithful. Some of them were copied by the priests into the parish registers so that they could be consulted long after the original had left the parish. Subsequently, they returned to the seats of the deaneries bearing the signatures that attested the fact that they had circulated from parish to parish; hence, their name of circular letters. In the second part of the 19th century, after the introduction of large-scale printing, circulars were printed and sent out by the diocesan ecclesiastical authorities to every parish community for a fixed amount of money. The archive funds of most parishes preserve almost complete collections of ecclesiastical circulars. To identify the circulars issued during wartime, I have consulted several archive funds, especially those of archdiocesan parishes like Bucerdea Vinoasă (Alba County), Archiud (Bistrita County) and Sanger (Mures County).²

For this study, I have selected all the circulars issued by the Archbishop of Alba Iulia and Făgăraș during World War I. From the perspective of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, this was a Romanian Greek-Catholic diocese, one of the four of its kind in Transylvania. The titular bishop of the archdiocese was also the Metropolitan,

1. http://hiphi.ubbcluj.ro/Propaganda_de_razboi/home_en.htm.

2. I must thank my colleague Daniela Deteșan for providing me with some circulars that were missing from the collection of 1915.

the head of the entire Romanian Greek-Catholic Church. He was directly responsible for almost half a million priests and faithful in his diocese,³ but also led the destinies of over one million Romanian Greek Catholics in Transylvania, according to the 1910 Census.⁴ Thus, the decisions communicated through the circulars I have selected can be considered representative for the entire Romanian Greek-Catholic community of Transylvania during the war, even if their wording could vary from one diocese to another.

From a chronological perspective, I have selected the circulars of 1915 because this was the first year marked entirely by the world conflagration. Thus, the circulars issued in 1915 address a mixture of topics, including the customary ecclesiastical, administrative and educational subjects from the pre-war years, but also those imposed by the state of belligerence.

Another methodological aspect to be mentioned is how I have defined the individual research items. Before the generalization of printing, circulars were published in a limited number of copies and circulated from parish to parish. In 1865 it was decided that every parish in the archdiocese should receive a copy of the published circulars. However, the individual topics were not clearly distinguished from one another in the texts of the circulars, which addressed a diversity of subjects but without granting them separate treatment on the page.⁵ Once the printing process became more widespread, circular letters were published in brochures, reuniting various subjects and each issue being clearly identified by a serial number; hence, considerable savings could be made concerning the postage fees for the documents.

During World War I, circulars were organized into brochures, each comprising about two to ten letters. However, there were individual circulars as well, published in cases of emergency; they conveyed expeditious messages, which needed to be swiftly communicated to the priests and the faithful.

For the purposes of this study, I have defined an individual circular as a document that addressed a single topic, sometimes clearly suggested in the title. On the front page of the document there was a distinct serial number and the text ended with the place and date of issuance and with the formula "issued following the consistorial meeting." It bore the signature of one of the higher prelates, attesting the fact that an official resolution had been passed by the ecclesiastical authorities.

In this study, I have used a combined - quantitative and qualitative - analysis of the sources and made recourse to historical reconstruction so as to outline the context of World War I. In order to highlight the purpose of the mobilizing

3. *Șematismul veneratului cler al arhidiecezei mitropolitane greco-catolice române de Alba-Iulia și Făgăraș pe anul 1911*, (Blaj: Tipografia Seminarului teologic gr. cat., 1911), 252-253.

4. The 1910 census recorded more than 1.2 million Greek-Catholic believers, but some of them were probably not Romanian, but of another ethnic background, most likely Ruthenian. *Census 1910. Transylvania*, Traian Rotariu (ed.), Maria Semeniuc Mezei Elemer, (Bucharest: Staff, 1999), 596-598.

messages launched in 1915 I have resorted to content analysis and to the specific methods of communication studies. In examining the distribution channels of propaganda messages from the issuing institution to the general population, I have reconstructed the message delivery model and identified the prevalent patterns of mass and organizational communication.

Some Pie Charts and a Diagram of Communication

THE CIRCULARS issued from 1914 to 1918 form a sample of 650 items. Their distribution by years is shown in Figure 1. The circulars of 1915 amount to about 19 % of the total sample and they represent the basis for my study.

The 123 circulars from 1915 that were included in the sample for this study cover various topics. Therefore, I was interested in analyzing the issuing authority, as well as the messages transmitted to the church authorities and the population. I also reconstructed the distribution channels and the target groups of the circulars.

First, I identified the issuing authority of each message, namely the first generator of the order. Officially, all the circulars were issued by the Metropolitan Consistory, as they contained the decisions reached by this ecclesiastical institution. However, some orders were merely circulated by the Consistory, without having been drafted by the church authorities. I defined as the “issuing authority” the institution that released the first order which led, in the end, to the publication of the circular. The first issuer is mentioned in this capacity, more or less explicitly, in the text of the circular. This can be ascertained by confronting the date when the order was issued with the date when the circular letter was dispatched: the former always comes before the latter.

By analyzing the issuing authority, I managed to identify several distinct situations, which I included into three categories, presented in Figure 2. The first group consists of the circulars issued by the ecclesiastical authority, namely the Consistory (about 72 %). The second group includes the political authorities, i.e. various ministries or institutions of the Hungarian State. The third category comprises those issuers that could not be integrated within the other two clearly defined sets, such as benefit societies or private persons.⁶

5. For example, the circular issued on February 13/25, 1865, has four pages of relatively compact text, but contains 11 distinct topics, collapsed together in a single paragraph. National Archives Alba County Branch (NAACB), Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Aiudul de Sus*, File 1/1865, 1^r-2^v.

6. The “Others” category included a single institution in 1915, Katholikus Patronage Egysület, a Catholic association in Budapest, which requested the help of the Romanian Greek-Catholic authorities for the registration and resettlement of war orphans. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinasă*, file 1/1915, 6^r.

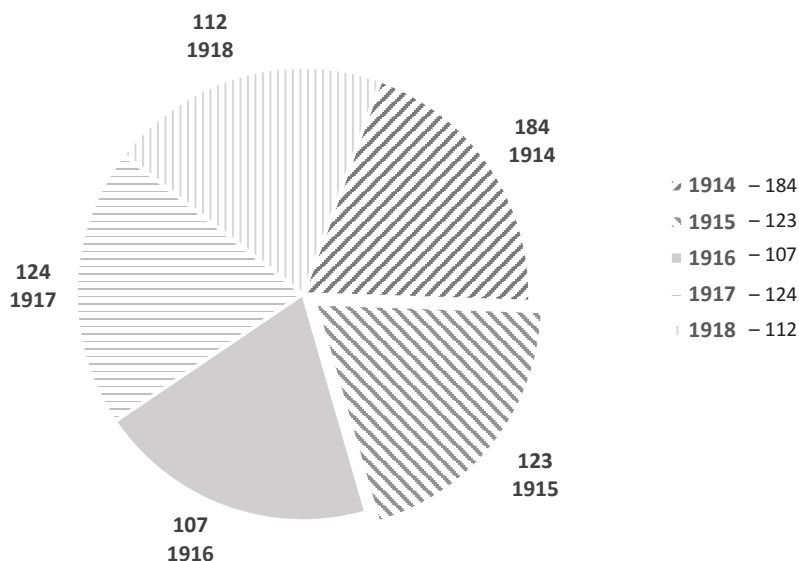


FIG. 1. The distribution of circular letters (1914-1918) – sample of 650 items

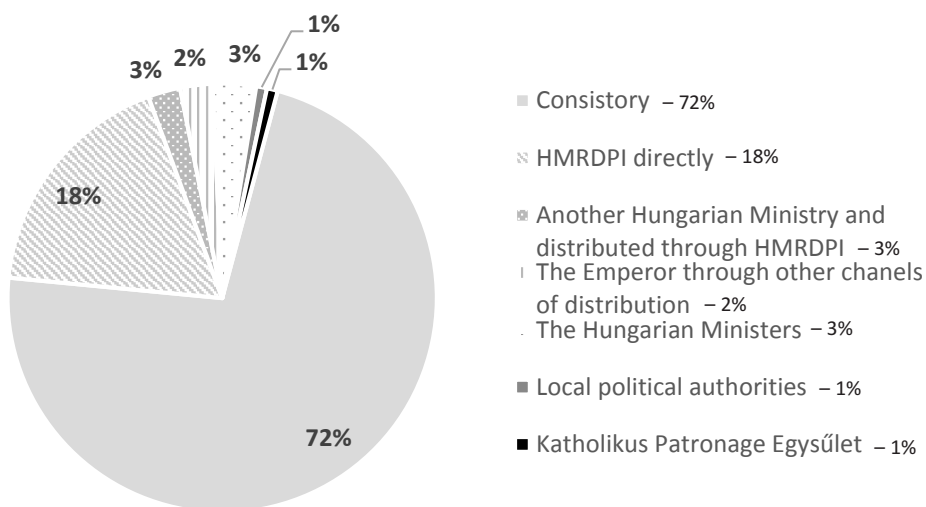


FIG. 2. The Issuing Authorities of Circular letters in 1915 (Sample of 123 items)

In most of the cases, the Consistory was the issuing authority, as can be seen in Figure 2. However, in one quarter of the 1915 circulars, the Consistory acted more like a communication relay for the messages of the other civil institutions, included in the category of political authorities. The church authorities acknowledged in the circulars that they were merely conveying messages sent out by the ministries in Budapest. The orders were most frequently signed by the Hungarian Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Instruction (hereinafter HMRD-PI), but I also encountered situations where the orders were passed from one political institution to another, until they reached the Metropolitan chancellery.⁷

The analysis of these categories of issuing authorities becomes relevant when it is correlated with the topics of the circulars. In the 89 circulars issued directly by the church authorities (for reference, see Figure 3), I noticed the clear predominance of ads for vacant positions, partially or totally financed by the church: 60 were job announcements for priests or teachers in denominational schools, listing the requirements for such positions.

Another batch of circulars comprised the annual financial reports of the Metropolitan administration, which offered an overview of the manner in which the funds had been managed by the ecclesiastical institutions. The circulars were also used to announce scholarship competitions for pupils and students from the denominational or vocational schools in the archdiocese. In a minority of cases, these circulars laid down ecclesiastical guidelines for the priests or recommended the purchase of some books for their personal or the parish libraries.

The orders issued by the political authorities and disseminated through ecclesiastical circulars had equally diversified topics (see Figure 4). This batch, consisting of 33 circulars, does not show a clear preference for a particular category of themes. It offers a balanced distribution of topics, as the circular letters address economic and military issues, collections and requisitions, as well as school-related matters. Seven of these circulars tackled issues related to the situation of teachers, such as their salaries, the exemption of certain categories of teachers from conscription and their transfer to the aid of the civil administration. The circulars concerning school masters outlined a harsh reality for denominational education: the gradual conversion of teachers into civil servants.

Equally important were the four circulars announcing the bank transfer of the congrua installments for the priests and of other state aids for the Romanian Greek-

7. The circular communicating the exemption from military service of several teachers was issued jointly by the Ministry of War and the Honvéd Ministry. It was then sent to the HMRDPI because all teachers were subordinated to that ministry. Subsequently, the HMRDPI communicated the order and its enforcement regulations to the ecclesiastical authorities in Hungary, to ensure that teachers in denominational schools would be duly notified. The Consistory informed the priests and the teachers about the provisions of the ministerial order. NAACB, *Fund Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 60^v-61^v.

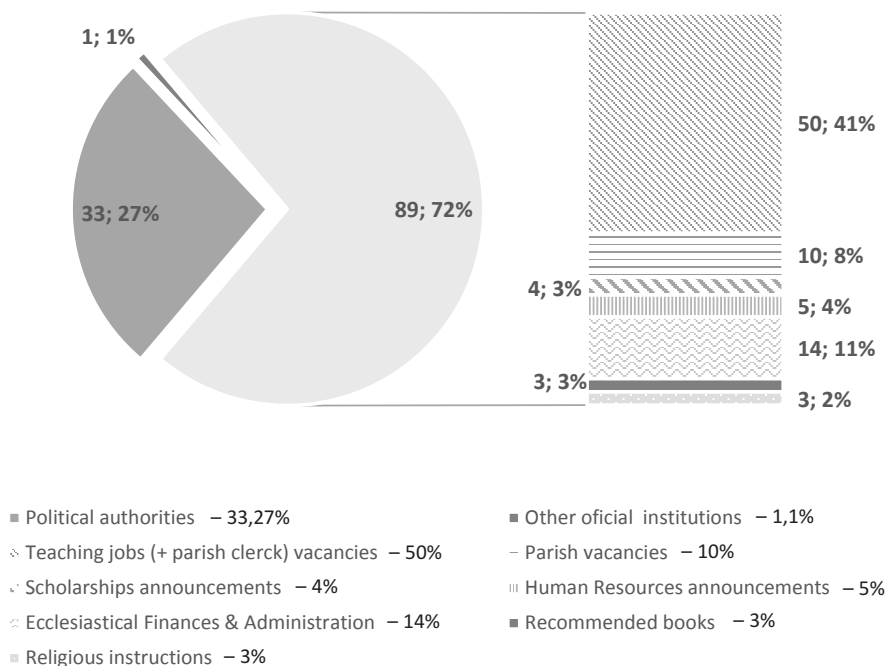


FIG. 3. Circular letters issued directly by the Consistory - 1915, themes

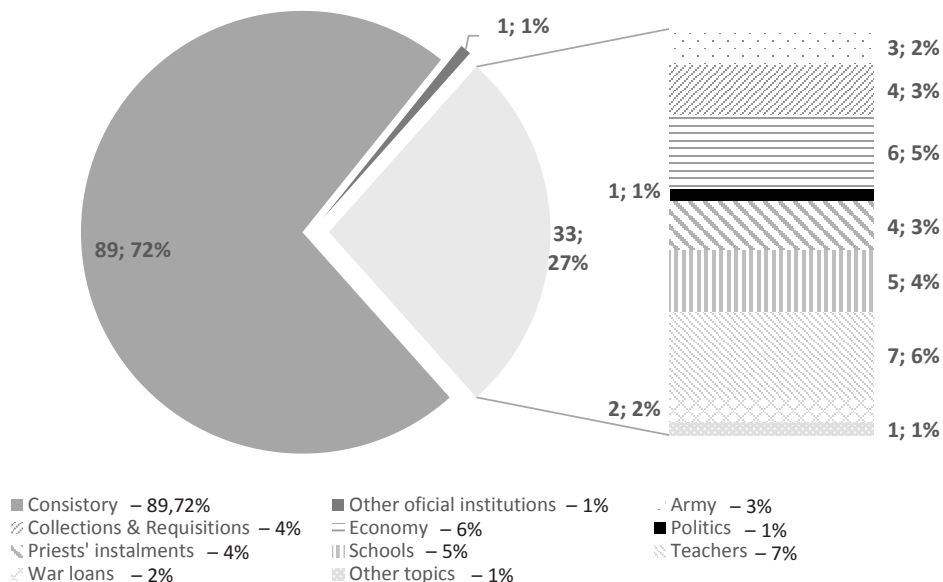


FIG. 4. Circular letters issued after decrees of the Political authorities, 1915 - themes

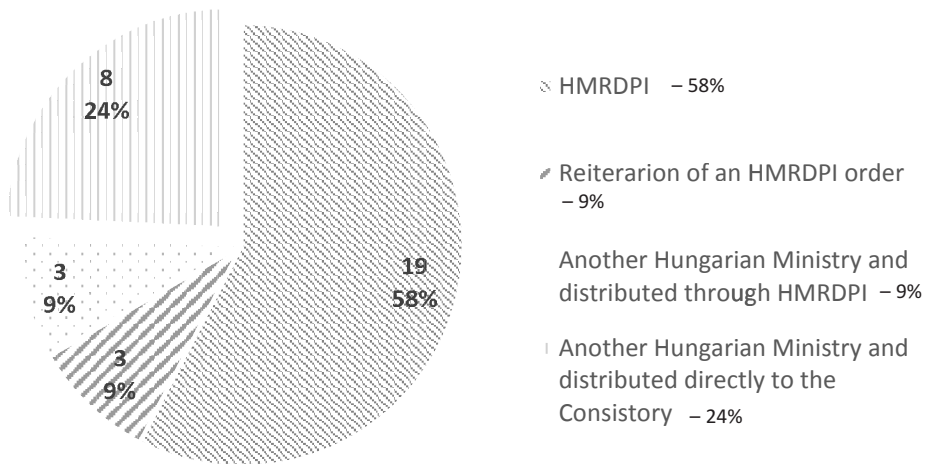


FIG. 5. First issuer - Political authorities, 1915 (sample of 33 items)

Catholic clergy from HMRDPI.⁸ These circulars highlight the amounts that were paid annually by the Ministry of Religious Denominations to the clergymen. They also serve as a second-hand indicator of the growing dependence of the clergy on the civil state, which ensured a significant part of priests' wages. This aspect is also of relevance for my study, because priests played a major role in mobilizing the population to support the war efforts. Controlling the salaries of the clergymen meant controlling the priests as well, since the payments were granted annually, in several installments.

The analysis of the 33 circulars issued by the political authorities targeted yet another aspect, namely the reconstruction of the distribution channels for the ordinances issued by the state (See Fig. 5). Thus, the HMRDPI was the primary issuer in the case of 19 circulars, its orders being passed directly to the ecclesiastical authorities. In three other cases, other Hungarian ministries resorted to the HMRDPI for the dissemination of their ordinances. There were eight cases in which other ministries or political factors sent out their orders directly to the ecclesiastical authorities, without any mediation from the HMRDPI. For the latter cases, a possible explanation can be that the circulars addressed military matters, such as the declaration of entry into war against Italy, or issues related to the soldiers and the spiritual care that was to be provided to them.

8. The *congrua* was the supplement paid by the state to priests in order to ensure that they received a minimum salary. In Hungary it consisted of two installments sent yearly in spring and in autumn, and it was completed in summer by an additional aid of a smaller value, the *quin-quenal*. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 9^r-12^r, 22^r-24^r, 47^r-50^r.

An aspect that is to be verified in the following stages of the research is whether the first issuer mentioned in the circulars - in most cases, the HMRDPI - was the stem-generator of the message or it propagated, in its turn, the messages received from higher or collateral government institutions, without explicitly mentioning them.

In the final quantitative analysis, I designed a diagram of the distribution channels described above, as they were mentioned in the 33 circulars issued by the political authorities. These circulars usually announced that Ministry X had sent a particular order to the church authorities, and the Consistory demanded that the clergy should communicate it to the faithful. Every institution or target group mentioned in the circulars was graphically represented through a node in the diagram, the links between these nodes charting the information communication flow. The sources used for this study only allow the reconstruction of a one-way information flow, from top to bottom, from the center to the periphery. While drawing the diagram of distribution channels, I took this aspect into account, so I used arrows to represent the transmission of orders.

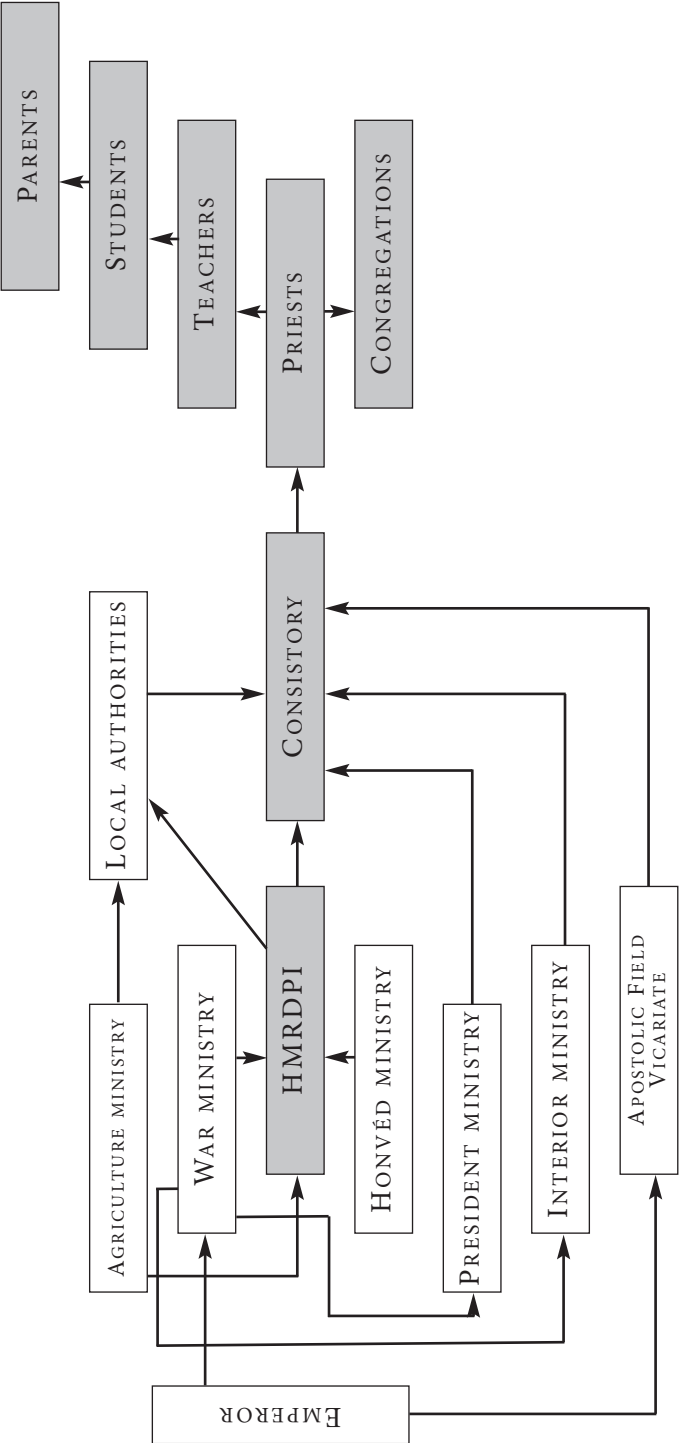
The hub of the network outlined in the circulars is represented, naturally, by the central ecclesiastical institution, namely the Consistory, which received the messages from the civil authorities and passed them on to the priests and the faithful. Identifying all the institutions mentioned as nodes of the orders transmitted in the texts of the circulars, on their way from the State to the church authorities, enabled me to chart a specific information distribution pattern, reproduced below (see diagram).

The diagram of communication between institutions, resulting from the analysis of the 1915 circulars, reveals a mixture of network communication models: the chain communication model and the all-channels model are combined with the wheel communication model, all of which are specific to organizational communication. In order to highlight the models of communication, the nodes received different colors in the diagram, allowing for a separation between the models, as well as for an identification of their contact points.

For the analysis of the resulting diagram, I used the models of communication within a network presented in Lunenburg's study dedicated to improving communication within an organization. Thus, the chain communication type means direct communication in a network from one node to the next node.⁹

9. There are five patterns of network communication, their names being derived from the model they provide when analyzing the nodes of the network and the flow of communication between the nodes. Therefore, we have chain, Y, wheel, circle, and all-channels models, each presenting a certain degree of centralization. Fred C. Lunenburg, "Network Patterns and Analysis: Underused Sources to Improve Communication Effectiveness," *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal*, vol. 29, Issue 1, (2011/2012), 1-7; Philippe Cabin, "Comunicare și organizație" in *Comunicarea. Perspective actuale*, Philippe Cabin, Jean-François Dortier (eds.), trans. Luminița Roșca and Romina Surugiu, (Iași: Polirom, 2010), 153.

Distribution channels, 1915



The chain is considered a model with a high degree of centralization, since each node communicates only with the previous and the subsequent nodes: it receives orders from the preceding node and conveys them to the following node. This type of communication is present in the final part of the diagram, represented with dark nodes: the HMRDPI is the first node and the second node corresponds to the ecclesiastical authorities at the central level of the diocese. Intermediate nodes are occupied by priests and teachers from denominational schools, while the terminal nodes (and the target groups) of these messages represent the communities of believers, namely the parents of children studying in denominational schools, who were also part of the community of believers. In some cases, the priests and the teachers could also represent terminal nodes, if they were the target group of these circulars.

The second model of communication can be found at the top of the diagram, presenting the flow of information between different ministries or institutions of the civil authorities. The all-channels model, which enables the free communication between all the members of the network, is highly decentralized. At the opposite end, we have the wheel model, which features the highest degree of centralization, as all nodes of the network communicate only with the center, the decision maker or the hub.¹⁰ In our case, it is possible that these are not pure all-channels and wheel models, but a combination of the features of the two, since a great number of the orders of political authorities ended up being sent to the HMRDPI for communication with the church authorities. Thus, the Ministry of Religious Denominations was one of the most important relays of communication for the State's ordinances to the general population. However, there were situations where other ministries communicated their orders directly to the ecclesiastical authorities, Figure 5 being illustrative in this regard.

A possible explanation for the coexistence of the two models situated at opposite poles of centralization in the upper part of the diagram could be given by the jurisdiction of each state institution. Thus, a theory that needs to be verified in the future is whether the all-channels model actually masked a wheel model whose center changed, depending on the jurisdiction of the institutions. Matters within the purview of a specific ministry were communicated mostly based on the former model. Even though my research considers mostly the religious perspective, it appears quite natural that the Ministry of Religious Denominations should occupy the central place in this diagram of communication.

In the chart there are two separate groups of network communication models. One is represented by the political authorities, which resorted to a combination of the all-channels and the wheel communication models. The other group included the ecclesiastical authorities and the people reporting to them, following the

10. Lunenburg, "Network Patterns", 2.

chain model. The HMRDPI node marked the transition between these two rather separate groups, constituting itself as a potential hub of the ecclesiastical authorities, but also serving as the primary node in the chain model. This is also confirmed by the 19 cases where the HMRDPI appeared as the stem-generator institution, the issuer of the orders sent to the church authorities.

It should also be mentioned that the diagram is an aggregate model of communication between the civil authorities, the ecclesiastical ones and the population. The chart includes all existing nodes and the communication flow as found in the text of the circulars; however, the communication diagram is not identical in all cases. Not all the listed nodes can be found in the case of each circular or in the same order. More precisely, each circular contains at least one node from the political authorities and at least two nodes of the ecclesiastical authorities (one central and one peripheral), because the Consistory as the publisher of the circulars could not be eschewed. Not all the orders targeted the general population: some had as a target group the clergy and denominational teachers and they often communicated details concerning their status and remuneration or aspects regarding exemption from enrollment or the organization of religious education.

The basic communication scheme found in this diagram is the triad chain, which can be represented by the formula HMRDPI → Consistory → Priests. It was mostly identified in circulars communicating the distribution of congrua or of other financial aids for the clergy. It was the most elementary chain model, expressing the above-mentioned composition of a node, which included the political authorities and two of the ecclesiastical institutions; the target group was represented by the clergy, the beneficiaries of the financial contributions.

One of the most complex communication schemes appears in the ordinance regulating the calculation of the soldiers' pensions. It was issued as an Imperial order sent to the Army and the Navy Ministries, the rules for its enforcement in Hungary having been laid down by Minister President István Tisza. The minister's directives were communicated through the Consistory to the subordinate clergy, and the priests received a mandate for informing the families of the soldiers drafted into the army about their right to request pensions.¹¹ The resulting scheme is Emperor → Army & Marine Ministers → President Minister → Consistory → Priests → Families of the soldiers. The diversity of the involved institutions shows the complexity of the issue, since it concerned the imperial army, whose supreme head was the King and Emperor. The army was one of three joint institutions of the two states that formed the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The decision was adopted by the Emperor as head of the army, and it was communicated to the joint ministers. However, its enforcement in Hungary was regulated by the Minister President. Since military

11. National Archives Bistrita County Branch (NABCB), Fund *Oficiul parohial greco-catolic Archiud*, file 6/1913-1917, 177.

matters were not within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Religious Denominations, the order was communicated directly to the church authorities for dissemination.

In conclusion, the text analysis associated with the identification of the first issuer of orders highlighted the fact that the circulars published following an order of the political authorities impacted the general population, even though they represented only one quarter of all the circulars in 1915. Their effect can be explained by the messages they communicate, as well as by the groups targeted by the respective orders. The mobilizing messages also had a propaganda effect, as they were intended to mobilize people to support the war efforts.

War loans, agricultural heroes, and the "enlightenment" of the people

IN THE second part of the study, the investigation shifts to the qualitative aspect, the circulars being subjected to content analysis. I have focused on the manner of communicating certain directives, as well as on the means of persuasion employed by the authorities to ensure compliance with their demands. The diversity of topics imposed a selection of the case studies representative for the studied period. In this study I will focus on two main themes, both relevant to the research, namely the war loans and agricultural campaigns of the year 1915. Both themes capture the ways in which the state attempted to activate its own financial and human resources, necessary for supporting the war.

Similarly to the situation of other combatant countries in World War I, war loans enabled the Austrian-Hungarian State to obtain the necessary liquidities for supporting the war economy and military expenses. In parallel with the activation of all available financial resources and a gradual increase in taxation, all belligerent states resorted to the loan solution by issuing war bonds. They tried to mobilize the resources of private parties, the free capital and the savings of the population, given that foreign loans were harder to access because of the lack of traditional financiers.¹² In Germany, war loans were strictly organized, being issued at every six months, in September and March.¹³ Austria-Hungary had shaped its financial policy after Germany's, including as regards the war loans model. However, since the Dual Monarchy had separate budgets and finance systems, the loans were launched separately in Austria and Hungary.¹⁴ Austria-Hungary's financial situation had been extremely difficult since the pre-war period; the financing burden of the conflict was placed on the shoulders of the population through various

12. Gerd Hardach, *The First World War, 1914-1918*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), 154.

13. Ernest L. Bogart, *Direct and Indirect Costs of the Great World War*, Second (Revised) Edition, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1920), 207.

14. Bogart, *Direct and Indirect Costs*, 240-241.

means, such as higher taxation, or through the eight war loans contracted from 1914 to 1918.¹⁵ The first subscription of war bonds in Austria-Hungary was launched in the autumn of 1914. The collected amounts were used for paying the war suppliers, as well as for placing new orders.¹⁶

In 1915, Austria-Hungary launched two such war loans, one in spring and the other in autumn, after the harvest. Both had been prepared in advance, allowing the people to become aware of all the details of the bond issue and ensure that the action would be as efficient as possible. Hungary officially launched its second war contribution in the second half of May 1915.¹⁷ Due to the short period of time allocated to war subscriptions, the political authorities took the measure of informing the targeted public beforehand. Fighting the mistrust of the population was one of the main hindrances faced by the state authorities, which considered it necessary to conduct a campaign to educate the citizens prior to the issuance of the bonds.

To achieve this goal, in April 1915 Minister President Tisza informed the church authorities of his intention, demanding that priests should become involved in the process of informing the population. The main target of this loan was “the unused, idle money” of the population, as well as the amounts deposited in credit institutions. Most of the targeted money had been obtained by these individuals from the sale of livestock or from compensations for products requisitioned in order to support the war. The role of the priests – “reliable, trusted and beloved counselors of the people in all circumstances of life” – would be to fight the believers’ distrust and to convince them about the “true nature” of the war loans. Minister Tisza required the ecclesiastical authorities to mobilize the clergy in good time, as “the enlightenment and the persuasion [of the people, a.n.] takes time.”¹⁸ All these actions were subsumed to the spirit of sacrifice demonstrated by the entire Hungarian society and all the churches in the country.

In the fall of 1915 the priests were given a further chance to prove their patriotism by preparing the ground for subscriptions to the third war loan. Once again, the Hungarian Government requested the involvement of the clergy in paving the way for the subscription. It was believed that the good harvest of the year had contributed to the capitalization of large amounts of money in the hands of people who were not accustomed to making investments in state bonds. This time, the order was signed by the Minister of Religious Denominations; he asked the priests to offer not only advice, but also a personal example by purchasing bonds, both from their own funds and from the amounts they administered for the community churches.¹⁹

15. Max-Stephan Schulze, “Austria-Hungary’s economy in World War I”, *The Economics of World War I*, Edited by Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 97-99.

16. Bogart, *Direct and Indirect Costs*, 239.

17. *Unirea* 4, XXV (1915): 1.

18. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 13^{r-v}.

19. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 45^r.

Compared to the previous mobilization, the Minister also demanded this time that the priests should urge the parishioners to make loan subscriptions and notify the people that in giving money to the state they could fulfill a "patriotic duty." The population had to understand that the value of money, just like that of subscribed bonds, was solely dependent on "the power, authority and welfare of the state."²⁰ By their contributions, they could actually defend their own interest, since they supported their state's victory.

In both cases, the ecclesiastical authorities asked the subordinate clergy to meet the demands of the political authorities. Still, a secondary aspect that should be taken into consideration is the date when the political authorities' ordinances were issued. The orders concerning the loans were shortly followed by decrees which communicated the installments of the *congrua* for the clergy.²¹ The *congrua* was a salary supplement granted by the state to the priests of the various denominations officially recognized in Hungary. The amounts were established accordingly to insure a minimum entitlement for different categories of priests.²² The collation of the *congrua* distribution lists to the personnel in the archdiocese shows that most priests received salary incentives. The state distributed considerable sums, surpassing in some cases half of the established amount for the minimum entitlement.²³

In addition, the 1909 Law concerning the *congrua* of the Catholic clergy stipulated that the supplements could be withdrawn for a whole ecclesiastical jurisdiction if the church authorities promoted ordinances contrary to the public order.²⁴

20. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 45^v.

21. The order of the Minister President announcing the intention of launching a war loan subscription was dated April 13, 1915, while the first installment of the *congrua* for the Romanian Greek-Catholic clergy was announced on April 16. Similarly, the announcement of the preparation of the third war loan was signed by the Minister of Religious Denominations on October 2, 1915, while the second installment of the *congrua* was sent by an order dated October 22. Another aspect of the organization of communication that is worth mentioning is that the announcement of the second war loan was published by the Church authorities in the same set of circulars as that about the first *congrua* installment. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 9^r-13^v, 45^{r-v}, 47^r-50^r.

22. Ioan Genț, *Administrație bisericească*, (Oradea, 1912), 265-266.

23. On 22 October, the HMRDPI sent a total of 282,655 crowns as the second installment of *congrua* to be divided between 619 parish priests in the Archdiocese of Alba Iulia and Făgăraș. The amounts ranged from 15 to 1,000 crowns, but the average wage supplement amounted to about 400-500 crowns. There were also some cases of priests who received the *congrua* twice, since they served in multiple parishes, thus enjoying separate salaries for each position. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 47^r-50^r. Even if we take these cases into account, the number of clergymen receiving salary supplements from the state was significant when compared with the list of archdiocesan personnel, namely the nearly 700 parish priests registered by the 1911 Schematismus. *Șematismul veneratului cler al Arhidiecezei mitropolitane greco-catolice române de Alba-Iulia și Făgăraș pe anul 1911*, (Blaj: Tipografia Seminarului Teologic gr. cat., 1911).

24. Genț, *Administrație*, 265-266.

Gradually, the state assumed the payment of the clergy's salaries and, like in the case of teachers from denominational schools, it conditioned the distribution of the *congrua* on the remunerated priests' demonstration of patriotism and compliance with the law.

These aspects are relevant to the study since they emphasize the fact that the church authorities were unable to reject the demands made by the civil authorities, which paid a significant amount of the salaries of the ecclesiastical personnel. Thus, more or less intentionally, the state put pressure on the ecclesiastical authorities and on the subordinated clergy. The possibility of resistance, either individual or collective, against the state's orders became problematic. Most of the government's orders did not contain any specific threat; they only made references to the patriotic duty of the higher clergy in Hungary to support the "great matter of national import." Still, their message was unequivocal, and the ecclesiastical authorities, more specifically, the bishops tried to avoid any ambiguous situation that might lead to a cessation of the installments for the clergy in their diocese. In times of war, the *congrua* meant survival for the priests and their large families, since most of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church's clergy were married. In the end, the ecclesiastical authorities advised the clergy to mobilize the population and even personally subscribe different amounts of money for the war loans, just as the political authorities had demanded.

In my second case study, I have examined the mobilization of the population in nationwide agricultural campaigns. The state of war had led to the transformation of agriculture into a matter of extreme economic importance for the Dual Monarchy. Imports were difficult to make given that most European countries were involved in the war. Moreover, the Central Powers were subjected to a systematic blockade that had greatly diminished food imports. All of the belligerent states were concerned about the capitalization of their economic resources or of those in the territories occupied after various battles. In Austria-Hungary, efficient farming had become an elusive goal, given the low productivity of the agricultural sector even before the war.²⁵

Prior to 1914, Hungarian agriculture had managed to meet the domestic demand of grain and even to supply part of the quantities needed by Austria, whose production was lower than the Hungarian one. The cereal harvest of 1914 was worse than the ones of the previous years, and by the end of 1914 food shortages had begun to be felt throughout the Dual Monarchy.²⁶ Establishing an intensive agri-

25. Schulze, "Austria-Hungary's economy in World War I," 85-86, 94.

26. One of the reasons for this agricultural collapse was the lack of manpower, but also the lack of necessary livestock, seeds and fertilizers. Another problem was represented by the fixed or maximum prices established for the purchase of crops, which meant a lower income for the farmers, followed by their lower interest in agricultural production. Schulze, *Austria-Hungary's economy in World War I*, 91-94.

cultural program, characterized by the general mobilization of the home-front population in the agricultural campaigns, became one of the main objectives of the Hungarian governments. The mobilization of citizens was carried out including through the churches, as proven by some circulars issued in 1915.

One of the first orders to this effect was signed by the Agriculture Minister. On January 22, 1915, it was sent both to the local civil authorities and to the ecclesiastical administration. At the request of the Minister, the Consistory appealed to the priests and the teachers in the denominational schools; they were entrusted with the mission of activating the community members, of enlightening the people and of setting personal examples for the parishioners to follow. The order provided a detailed plan of agricultural activities, placed under the slogan "no piece of land left uncultivated or fruitless." Involvement in the agricultural campaign was deemed to be "a beautiful patriotic deed." The order targeted groups like women, children, the elderly, civil servants and intellectuals: in a word, all those who were not involved in the actual combats. Special attention was paid to the men who were exempted from military service on the ground that their staying at home would be vital for agriculture. The civil authorities set up activity checks, evaluating their degree of involvement in community service. A negative assessment of their public usefulness on the home front could mean the cancellation of their exemption from military service.

A meaningful aspect of the orders from the Agriculture Ministry was represented by the parallel drawn between the military front and the agricultural campaign zone. It was stipulated that reports of the major "economic battles," should be compiled and that the "leaders of economic activities and the heroes of agricultural campaigns" should have their names recorded in a golden book, as they deserved to be known to posterity, just like the soldiers.²⁷ Thus, the home front was activated in order to support the efforts of those in the trenches, both categories of the population fighting equally hard for the good of the homeland.

The following circulars on agricultural topics targeted the availability of labor throughout the farming year. As M.S. Schulze noted, whereas the use of modern technology in agriculture was relatively scant, over 67% of the agricultural workforce in Hungary was represented by men. Recruitments had caused an overall decline of manpower, so the mobilization of those left behind was quasi-general, as seen in a circular announcing the 1915 agricultural campaign plan.

Notwithstanding all these demands, the local and central political authorities complained that many believers were reluctant to work on Sundays and public holidays, which adversely affected the agricultural plan. The priests were called upon to dispel the "religious scruples" of their parishioners and to strengthen their patriotism. In order to persuade the faithful, the ecclesiastical authorities provided priests

27. NACCB, *Fund Oficiul parohial greco-catolic Archiud*, file 6/1913-1917, 117^r-118^v.

with a plausible explanation for that infringement of the old religious prescriptions: the communities of believers had to learn that by working on Sundays and holidays, did not disrespect the word of God because, in this way, they offered help to their neighbors in need, i.e. those who needed help to complete agricultural tasks.²⁸

In connection with the efforts of obtaining richer crops, mandatory for supporting the war economy, it is worth noting that in 1915 the consumption of white bread was declared a sin against the homeland. Those who did not comply with the order to eat bread made of two thirds white flour mixed with one third of lower-quality flours “helped the enemy, because they weakened the economic strength of the country.”²⁹ This provision was part of a larger order of the Ministry of Agriculture, propagated through the HMRDPI to the ecclesiastical authorities. The order tried to impose a rationalization of quality grains consumed behind the frontlines, which otherwise could have been used to feed the soldiers on the battlefield. The ordinance targeted especially those who ground the flour or baked bread at home and who escaped the direct supervision of the civilian authorities. The Agriculture Ministry emphasized that, for the moment, this was only a request, not an express order of the government. However, it was a call addressed to the conscience of every citizen of the country, which could be violated only out of “hollow vanity or despicable selfishness.” The consumption of mixed grain bread was a “patriotic duty” for the public, an insignificant gesture compared to the sacrifice of the soldiers on the front, but absolutely essential for defeating the enemies.³⁰

The ecclesiastical authorities advised the clergy to urge the faithful to respect the demands of the political authorities. However, in this particular case, the hierarchs amended the government’s demand, requiring that the Eucharist be further prepared from white flour only, in order to respect the canons.³¹

The two case studies highlighted some of the methods used by the State in order to mobilize people through the ecclesiastical authorities. The analyzed circulars stressed that the role of the priests was to enlighten, explain and steer the population on the home front onto the right track. Incidentally, the symbol of light that could dispel the darkness of ignorance or the mistrust of ordinary people appeared with some frequency in the circulars based on certain orders issued by the State. Religious terminology and imagery were more and more frequently appropriated and used in civilian documents, probably because the target audience was already familiar with it from ecclesiastical documents.

In the texts of circulars issued after an order of the political authorities we can identify an almost perfect blend of propaganda and control leveled at different target groups of citizens, carefully interspersed with doses of patriotic duty. The

28. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 50^{r-v}.

29. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 2^v-3^r.

30. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 3^r.

31. NAACB, Fund *Parohia gr. cat. Bucerdea Vinoasă*, file 1/1915, 3^r.

purpose of these orders was to preserve peace behind the frontlines, if we are to paraphrase the work of Humphries & van Emden,³² and to mobilize civilians to support the war efforts. Orders were spiced up with terms like "best interests of the country," "patriotic deed," "patriotic endeavor" or "patriotic efforts." The citizens were fighting and working for a "free homeland," for "the unity of the motherland," the "defense of the homeland," or for the "native land," and they were encouraged to submit the amounts subscribed by war loans onto the "altar of the motherland." The messages were meant to co-interest citizens in supporting the war efforts, but also to emphasize that the losses of the homeland were, just as well, personal losses of each and every individual. It is worth recalling the way they tried to mobilize the public for subscribing to war loans: those who had savings were urged to buy war bonds to ensure that the national currency would remain stable, particularly given that those savings would be just as valuable at the end of the war.

To disseminate the messages of mobilization and propaganda, the government of Hungary resorted to a practice already commonly used in the second half of the 19th century: conveyance through ecclesiastical circulars. This method of communication was successful, especially when the target group consisted of the rural population, with rudimentary education and low incomes, whose members were impervious to the mass media messages or to the propaganda posters and brochures. In these cases, the sermon delivered from the pulpit, followed by the reading of circulars, ensured the efficient dissemination of messages, especially if the recommendation of the priest was accompanied by his personal "word and example." The role of the central ecclesiastical authorities was to act as relays of transmission, receiving the orders of the civilian authorities and conveying them to the clergymen under their jurisdiction. In most cases, the State's orders were communicated with firm recommendations for their strict enforcement, but there were particular situations in which the higher clergy made amendments as regards their implementation. The effect of such messages still remains to be researched, in order to understand to what extent they mobilized the human and economic resources needed to support the war. This effect can be studied by closing the feedback loop through an analysis of the reports drafted by the ecclesiastical authorities in response to the requests made by the political authorities.

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32. Richard Van Emden, Steve Humphries, *All Quiet on the Home Front: An Oral History of Life in Britain during the First World War*, (London: Headline, 2003).

A SIGNIFICANT SUCCESS OF THE PREPARATIONS FOR WAR IN ROMANIA IN 1915

The Book *War Surgery* by Iacob Iacobovici



CRISTIAN BÂRSU

Abstract

During the period of neutrality, before Romania entered World War I, different preparations in the field of war medicine were done. A significant contribution in this field was the volume “War Surgery” written by Iacob Iacobovici (1879-1959) and published in 1915. The purpose of our paper is to highlight the importance of this book in improving the effectiveness of war surgery in Romania.

Iacobovici gave some fundamental indications regarding the civilian surgical practice. He was an advocate of the conceptions that during wars, specific war pathology cannot replace the general pathology, which occurs whether there is peace or war. Iacobovici point out that besides anaesthesia and surgical treatment of various types of wounds and fractures, a book about war surgery must include topics about the organization of war medical activities. In his book he discussed about war weapons and their effects, as well as about the bindings that should exist between the health formations and between these teams and the headquarters.

Keywords

War surgery, surgical treatment, Iacob Iacobovici, sanitary organisation, war weapons

Introduction

BEFORE ROMANIA entered World War I, during the period of neutrality several preparations for war were done, such as some political briefings, different medical preparations, etc.¹ Unfortunately, only few of these have proven their utility in practice. This situation can be explained by the fact that World War I has shown significant differences in comparison with previous wars, both in terms of medicine and military strategies. Another reason is that medicine has done different progresses rapidly in the interval between wars, as mentioned by Roger Cooter.²

It is very significant that: “for medicine two wars started in 1914: one on the battlefield and one on the front home” – as Christopher Lawrence mentioned. He added that:

“There were not, however, separate wars. Historians are far from united on the role or of the effect on medicine in either case. There are two related issues to consider when writing the history of the Great War on medicine: one general and one particular. This observation applies to both wartime fronts. At the general level there is a problem of the relation between war, medicine, and modernization. The question is this: in what way were recognizably modern form of organization brought into play in the war and how far did medicine utilize and promote them? Further, to what extent did any military-induced medical modernization spill over into peacetime? [...] At the particular level it is important to explore how various wartime problems were seen to be medical issues, and how far solutions for such problems were temporary and how far they too were carried out into peacetime?”³

1. An example of medical preparations was the provision of the sanitary material for World War I. General Radu R. Rosetti (1877-1949) mentioned in his “Testimonials” that a great change was during the period January 1914 and August 1916. At the beginning of this period existed only 20% of this material. In August 1916 all this material existed. Surely, this opinion was based on the general need of the Romanian army and not on the need of civilians in case of epidemics. General Radu R. Rosetti, “Pregătirea războiului de întregire” (“Preparation of wholeness war”), in *Mărturisiri, 1914-1919* [Testimonials, 1914-1919] (Bucharest: Modelism Publishing House, 1997), 57.
2. Roger Cooter, “War and Modern Medicine”, in *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*, Ed. W. Bynum, Roy Porter, vol. 2 (London, New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2006): 1551.
3. Christopher Lawrence, “World War I, 1914-18”, in *The Western Medical Tradition. 1800 to 2000*, W.F. Bynum, Anne Hardy, Stephen Jacyna, Christopher Lawrence and E.M. Tansey (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 250.

These rhetorical questions cited above justify the fact that in Romania a large part of the medical preparations for war were made using theoretical information. Some of them were still focused on practical approaches. For example, the medical war-related information was published in newspapers, or as brochures and even as books.

One of the most significant medical studies of that time with useful practical guidance based on theoretical weapon notions was the volume “War Surgery”, written by Iacob Iacobovici (1879-1959) and printed in 1915. We chose to analyse this book from the medico-historical point of view as it was printed exactly 100 years ago.

Iacobovici was the pupil of Thoma Ionescu⁴ (1860-1926). In 1915 Iacobovici was docent at the Faculty of Medicine in Bucharest and, in the meantime, primary surgeon at the Surgical Consultations Department of “Colțea” Hospital from the same city. He was also Major physician in reserve. He was author of significant papers of surgery and was appreciated as one of the most skilled young surgeon.

The purpose of our study is to highlight the importance of this book wrote by Iacobovici in improving the effectiveness of war surgery in Romania. This monograph was useful for getting organizational experiences in war medicine, for weapons presentations and primarily in surgical war therapy.

Although Iacobovici stressed that his volume was only a guide in the war surgery, though the book has greater merits, which we will systematize and highlight in the following subtopics.

Short overview of the development of surgery at the beginning of the 20th century

ONE OF the first very important periods of the progress of surgery in Europe took place between the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century. Among the most classic elements that gave rise to the progress of surgery may be included: the adaptation of physiology and anatomy to the specific surgery; introduction and passing of experimental surgical techniques from animals to human surgery; formation of a current surgery presses; appearance of scientific surgery societies and national associations of surgeons; establishment of surgical clinics and surgery departments in large hospitals etc.⁵

4. Thoma Ionescu was a surgeon and anatomist. He was a professor and the head of the Department of Topographic Anatomy and Surgical Clinic within the Bucharest Faculty of Medicine (1895-1926). He is considered the founder of the first modern Romanian school of surgery.
5. Radu Iftimovici, “Medicina și farmacia în secolul al XIX-lea” [Medicine and pharmacy in the nineteenth century], in *Istoria universală a medicinei și farmaciei* [Universal history of medicine and pharmacy], (Bucharest: Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2008), 486-488.

Iacobovici's considerations about war surgery

IACOB IACOBOVICI was an advocate of the conception that during wars, specific war pathology did not replace the general pathology, which occurred whether there was peace or war. He used to say: "War surgery is not different from the common surgery and one cannot improvise himself to be a surgeon daily, much less anyone can do so on the battlefield. Therefore for doing war surgery one must have an extensive experience in general surgery".⁶

He divided surgery into two major types: one being the "individual surgery" and the other being the "collective surgery". The "individual surgery" means that it is performed to a sick applying for him absolutely everything considered to be necessary for his disease. The "collective" surgery has the advantage of being performed in a short time of war, to a very large number of wounded. He pointed out that on the battlefield the priority belonged to the medical act which eliminated the immediate cause of death. After that moment it was possible to do a real therapeutic surgery for patients who required it, if time and circumstances permitted. Iacobovici insisted that war surgeons were obliged at the same time to do therapeutic activities and to apply the military regulations. These two duties must be performed according to the circumstances of the war. Moreover, on the battlefield it was possible that the surgical practice look in a new way, because it was practiced in a medium where everything was improvised.

For explaining to the readers of his book the new and unimaginable conditions in which the war surgeons were obliged to carry out their activity, Iacobovici gave the following example: "Let our imagination take us for a moment on a battlefield, in the middle of hundreds of wounded people, without an operating theatre, without sterilized dressings, having only a few surgical instruments, bandages, and wadding. Add that, at 5-6 km. distance, the battle is in full swing and there is information that it is possible for the front to progress or to retreat [...], while the wounded continually come and ask to be helped". He continued the description of this hypothetical situation by asking the following question: "for what would it be the useful if a surgeon respected the principles of washing hands for 15 minutes, for making a single point of suture at a patient, or if he tried to put into evidence a certain symptom to clarify the diagnosis?"⁷ It is evident that during wars different rules of classical surgery cannot be put into practice, because there is no time for them. What is essential is to save the life of the wounded.⁸

6. Iacobovici accepted that, in case of emergency, a doctor who is not surgeon has the duty to ensure first aid, even if it involves surgical manoeuvres. However, that does not mean that a real surgical activity can be done by other physicians than surgeons.

7. Iacob Iacobovici, *Chirurgia de război* [War surgery] (Bucharest: „Cultura” Printing, 1915), 6.

8. Surely, there is an important risk of septic complications, but this risk must not diminish the professional courage and the energy of war surgeons.

To be more convincing, Iacobovici included in his book some fragments of three letters published in *Münchener medizinische Wochenschrift*. Thus, in one of the letters (published in the same journal, No. 39, Sept. 29/1914), its author – a physician from a principal post for dressing (something equivalent to the Romanian divisional ambulance in 1914) – described the hurry and the difficult conditions under which war physicians had to do their treatments:

“At 5 a.m., we were in L., greeted by strong cannon bursts, after 15 hours of travel [...] and, barely eating something, came the order to do the installation [of the post for dressing]. We set up two tents and, surrounded by shrapnel exploding in front and behind us, we began to work with the sleeves rolled up. Our place was marked by the Red Cross flag and was totally respected. I had the compartment for receiving the wounded, where the injured were divided into: seriously injured, non-transportable and easily wounded. I was unpleasantly impressed that it was no space for patients to sit down and they were placed on the ground, and there was no water, so it was impossible to wash our hands. Towards the evening the rain began and, in the middle of our work, the departure order was announced, because the enemy began to move forward.”⁹

Including literary aspects in a book with scientific surgical character seems to be strange. The advantage of this method can be explained by the fact that Iacobovici wanted thereby to familiarize the inexperienced surgeons, who were sent on the front, with that could be incredible. His aim was to provoke a faster and a greater adaptation for practicing surgery on the battlefield.

Knowing the importance of the ethical principles for the surgical activity, Iacobovici mentioned clearly the qualities needed for war surgeons. A war surgeon must act without emotion and have a spirit of order. He added that a war surgeon should not to be a scientist or a very important and skilful surgeon. To demonstrate his point of view he outlined that German and French armies, although having traditions and many war experiences, as well as having an experienced staff practiced by numerous sanitary manoeuvres, yet felt crippled in the presence of the massacres which took place at the beginning of the First World War. He added that “only now [in 1915], when the battlefield is turned into battle transient fortifications, health service can work in more human conditions. In fact, in these battles the number of the wounded is smaller, the advancements and retreats of the front are slower, so the war sanitary formations can keep their place and can work”.¹⁰

Regarding the complex knowledge needed for the activity of war surgeons, Iacobovici underlined that these surgeons should know both the international conventions and the military regulations, but also all belligerent armaments and effects. Otherwise, errors may occur, having repercussions on the surgical acts.

9. Iacob Iacobovici, *Chirurgia de război*, 28.

10. Iacob Iacobovici, *Chirurgia de război*, 6.

We consider that for young surgeons it was rather difficult to have in mind all these notions. However, to prove the usefulness of these notions Iacobovici revealed an error presented in many papers of war surgery, edited at the beginning of the First World War. At that time there were reported numerous cases of injuries produced by dum-dum projectiles. Later was found that the physicians who had declared the existence of the lesions caused by dum-dum projectiles had not enough notions about the deformations of projectiles ricocheted by the obstacles encountered in the field or produced inside of the human organism by its bones¹¹. Iacobovici knew that the surgical lesions produced by dum-dum projectiles were different from the injuries caused by other types of projectiles. This is one motivation for which he insisted on their description in his book "War surgery". Another reason was that many physicians from that time did not make enough differences between various types of projectiles. For that motive he mentioned the error made by a German doctor who described the French military projectiles as being of dum-dum type. It is possible that he knew the name of the German physician, but he did not name him by a professional collegial attitude.

As many surgeons of the beginning of the 20th century, Iacobovici stressed on the importance of two principles regarding war surgery: "war surgery should be performed so that the number of invalids be minimal" and "statistical results of war surgery must refer to the percentage of invalids and not of survivors".¹² From this point of view, it is significant that Iacobovici introduced in his book data related to the patients acceptance for an amputation. Thus, few days after their survival, some of them refused foot or hand amputation, although it was destroyed¹³ on the battlefield, invoking various economic or social reasons.

11. For young and an inexperienced surgeon the macroscopic aspect of the lesion produced dum-dum projectile was not very simple to be differentiated from the aspect of the lesions caused by ricocheted projectile.
12. These principles were also presented in the book „war surgery”. We mentioned this quotation from the Introduction of the book *Misiunea sanitară română la Stara-Zagora (Bulgaria)*, written by I. Iacobovici et al. and published in Bucharest, at „Socet & Co.” Graphic Factory in 1913 (p. 3).
13. Amputation was not the only way of treatment for patients having destroyed part of their members. The problem was that at the beginning of the XXth century (and also during the First World War) reconstructive surgery was not sufficient developed to permit different ways of the reconstruction of the destroyed part of the body. The severe injuries which occurred during this war led to the development of plastic surgery. In this domain a very important contribution was done by Harold Gillies (1882-1960).

Iacobovici's war experiences and reasons that led him to write the book "War Surgery"

IACOBOVICI'S PARTICIPATION in the Balkan War allowed him to acquire a rich war surgery experience. Between 1912 and 1913 he attended the Romanian sanitary mission in Stara Zagora as chief surgeon. Shortly afterwards, he described in the book entitled "Romanian military mission in Stara Zagora (Bulgaria)" his experience gained as leader, organizer and war surgeon. The volume was appreciated by the French Army inspector – the physician Edmond Delorme.¹⁴

The most important fact that Iacobovici that determined Iacobovici to write this monograph was the request received from Ion Cantacuzino¹⁵ (1863-1934). It was intended to be published in the "Medical Science Magazine".

Medico-historical analysis of the monograph "War Surgery"

THIS BOOK has 177 pages and was structured in three parts (or chapters), which are divided into 99 subchapters.

We present the contents of the chapters of this monograph, following its text and not the table of contents.

Part one has the following subchapters: War surgery; War weapons and their effects; Missiles; The wounded ratio depending on the type of weapons; Mortality; The connection between sanitary formations and between them and the respective command centres; The staff; Rolling materials and sanitary materials; The installation of sanitary formations; Letters from the battlefield; The service at a stage hospital; The service at a stretcher bearers column; The nourishment; Wounded who can be evacuated and those who cannot be evacuated: the wound-

14. Edmond Delorme (1847-1929) was a French military surgeon. He became associate professor of operative medicine at L'école d'application du Val-de-Grâce at Paris in 1877. In 1887 he was named professor of clinical surgery and war lesions at the same medical school of Val-de-Grâce. Delorme introduced the concept of antisepsis in French military medicine. In 1903, he was elected General Medical Inspector of the French Army. In 1915 he published the book "War surgery" (*Traité de Chirurgie de Guerre*). Delorme was founder-president of the French Society of Military Medicine.

The biography of Edmond Delorme was consulted in: Edmond Delorme 1847-1929, author M. Delorme, published in *Disease of the Colon & Rectum*, vol. 28, 7 (July 1985) <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2FBF02554110> accessed on 10.03.2016.

15. At that time Prof. Dr. Ion Cantacuzino's prestige was well-known in Romania and other countries, for example in France. In 1910 he directed the work for elaborating a new health law, which remained in the Romanian history of medicine as "Cantacuzino's Law" (or "Sion – Cantacuzino' Law").

ed that cannot be evacuated; the wounded who can be evacuated; sick; triage of wounded and of patients.

Part two contains the subchapters: Disinfection; Anesthesia; First dressing; Treatment of wounds by firearms; Soft tissue wounds; Blood vessels injuries; Artery lesions; Veins injuries; Complications of large blood vessels injuries; Secondary bleeding; Nerve injuries; Diaphysis of long bones lesions; Injuries caused by projectiles; Diagnosis of bone lesions; Diagnosis group: contact fractures; perforation fractures; Immediate or late complications, treatment of diaphyseal fractures; Joint injuries; Injuries flat bones; Short bone lesions; Wound complications – immediate wound complications: tetanus; anthrax; gas gangrene; necrosis in hospitalised patients; surgical erysipelas; septicæmias and pyæmias.

The third part consists of: The Cranium: contusions of the skull skin; skull skin wounds; The scalp; cranium fractures; symptoms of the skull fractures; complications of cranium fractures; fractures caused by firearms; wounds made by war firearms; cranium fracture treatment; Face: traumatic face injuries; fractures of the upper jaw; fractures of the jaw; Temporo-mandibular jaw dislocation; Eye injuries; Ear injuries; Spine: spine injuries (rachis) and marrow injuries; Cerebro-spinal commotion; Neck: traumatic injuries and infectious diseases of the neck: neck plagues; Wounds of vessels; Wounds of thoracic duct; Wounds of cervical nerves; Infectious diseases of the throat: (super) acute infection; adeno-phlegmons of the neck; Mouth and pharynx: traumatic lesions of the mouth and pharynx; Esophagus: traumatic lesions of the esophagus: foreign bodies of the esophagus; Larynx: traumatic lesions of the larynx; tracheostomy; Chest traumatism: Ruptures of the heart and pericardium; fractures and sprains of the sternum, ribs fractures; chest wounds: penetrating wounds; wounds of the pericardium and heart; mediastinal wounds; wounds of diaphragm; lung hernias; pleurectomy; The abdomen: abdominal contusions; abdominal wounds: non-penetrative wounds; penetrating wounds of the abdomen; wounds by war firearm; Basin: fractures of the pelvis; fractures of the pelvic ring; Lumbar region and kidneys: firearm wounds through the lumbar region and kidney; Bladder; wounds of the bladder; Rectum: Rectal wounds; Urethra: Traumatic lesions of the urethra; Scrotum and testicles: traumatic lesions of testes and scrotum; Limbs: upper limb wounds; The injuries of the hand and fingers; Voluntary mutilations; Wrists injuries; Forearm injuries; Elbow injuries; Arm injuries; Shoulder injuries; Lower limb wounds; Foot injuries; Ankle injuries; Leg injuries; Knee injuries; Thigh injuries; Hip injuries; Surgical therapeutic index.

We listed above all the subchapters from the book “War surgery” to outline Iacobovici’s complex approach of war lesions, avoiding to omit even the smallest macroscopic lesion. This presentation allows us to draw some achievements of the book. First of all, Iacobovici did a complete description of various types of injuries depending on the topographical description of regions of the human body: skull,

face, neck, spine and ribs, chest, abdomen, etc. From the organs framework, he grouped the injuries into different categories, such as: the mouth, pharynx, larynx, oesophagus, etc. It is remarkable that he described lesions by type of tissue: soft tissues (with special reference to blood vessels and nerves) and bone lesions. Also, a very positive aspect is that the author has kept in his presentation a common framework: pathological anatomy, the description of lesions, their frequency, symptoms, treatment and evolution. For example, in the case of pharynx and larynx foreign bodies he stressed the need for tracheostomy.

Sometimes Iacobovici approached some forensic aspects (e.g. for the heart ruptures consecutive to severe chest wounds). Very important is that he gave details about the most common infectious bacterial lesions from battlefield, such as: anthrax, anaerobic infections, etc.

It is notable that Iacobovici described some injuries also depending on the time when the surgical intervention was done: early or late.

In this book there is also a small chapter concerning voluntary mutilations. For limbs and joints wounds, he described the voluntary mutilations by shooting thumb done in order to escape from being enrolled in the army. On this occasion, Iacobovici blamed the lack of courage of the persons who produced to them such kind of mutilation. In his opinion, this method was likely to be very frequent and thus to become a negative example for those who were able to be enrolled.

Another tense part of this book deals with war weapons description and their effects. The aim of Iacobovici was to show that during wars, the kind and the evolution of lesions, as well as their treatment should be applied to patients depends on the type of the causal agent of injury.

War weapons and their effects

ALTHOUGH THE book “War Surgery” has a medical profile, 6.9% of it refers to war weapons and presents their effects. Iacobovici described with great accuracy and very skilfully different war weapons. He classified them into two categories: side arms (which disappeared over time) and firearms. He divided firearms into the following groups: portable weapons, such as shotgun, carbine, revolver, pistol and hand grenade (bomb); non-portable weapons, the main being the cannons and torpedoes, and mines. The portable firearms were divided by Iacobovici into: weapons which are handled with one hand: pistol and revolver and that are handled with two hands: shotgun, carbine, machine-guns. In the first category he described thereby the gun. The gun can be simple (a single load) or automatic (with several loads that are cycled through automatically: Mauser or Manlicher gun). The projectile is composed of a steel shirt with a strong lead centre. He specified that the revolver can use even today the old lead bullets, but

the latest models employ projectile shell, meaning covered with a loud shirt. The charger can be vertical or disc-shaped with 5-12 projectiles which is loaded automatically after each shot. The calibre of the projectile ranges from 5-12 mm and the distance useful in beating ranges from 150-200 meters. Regarding the revolver, Iacobovici underlined that it is the weapon of close combat especially during the night.

About rifles he showed that their calibre varied between 6.5 and 8mm. There are variable according to the countries in which they were made. He added that: "Usually two neighbour countries do not have the same calibre rifles, because in case of war they cannot use the ammunition of the other country: France, Austria, Portugal, Denmark have 8mm calibre rifles. Sweden, Serbia, Turkey, Belgium, England, and Germany between 7.5 and 8mm (the latter - 7.9 mm). Romania, Norway, Italy, and the United States - 6.5mm. The Romanian shotgun is of Manlicher type". Iacobovici also mentioned extensively the description of a rifle, a carbine and a machine-gun. He pointed out that during the Balkan War machine guns had a decisive role in many battles. He added that "soldiers noticed quickly that machine-gun fire was the most dangerous and used various methods to mimic the noise of machine gun to intimidate their enemy".¹⁶

Iacobovici extensively made the description of cannons and mortars. In contrast, he immediately added that he only "mentioned all the firearms without getting into a detailed description". He explained the reasons for which he did not give details. First of all, it was an ethical motive: he did not have the necessary competence for this purpose. The second motivation was that it would have been useless for readers.

He made descriptions of the ballistic projectiles curve. Then he divided the ballistic curves of projectiles from the surgical and forensic point of view. He described the following areas: the explosion zone, the perforation area, and the concussion zone. He underlined that these areas were not well defined. The explosion zone ranged from 0-300m or 500 m. The perforation area stretched over 1500 m, and the concussion zone from 1500m to 2000 m. If bones were in the explosive zone they became pulverized. Thus, a shot at the base of the skull crushed it and the brain was thrown out of the skull. When the bones were the area of perforation, they became crushed and rarely drilled. However, if internal organs were in the same zone, they became perforated. In the contusion area, the bullet penetrated in the body, but may be diverted by bones or tendons. It means that it is possible not to affect an internal organ.

Then, Iacobovici described three changes suffered by small projectiles: heating (when their setpoints reach up to 65-70 degrees, but this is not important from the surgical point of view), overthrow and derivation.

16. I. Iacobovici, *Chirurgia de război*, 10.

In his description about the projectiles ricochets, Iacobovici was inspired by the studies of Athanase Demosthen (1846-1925).¹⁷ Ricochets occur in 1/3 of war injuries, especially in mountainous areas. At 1200 meters altitude, projectiles salt in various directions up to 500 meters. At 1800 meters they salt to 250 meters. Given that all these projectiles are deformed, the lesions produced by them are very serious.

Regarding the distortion of projectiles, Iacobovici mentioned that it occurred when they met obstacles in their way (inert bodies or even the living organism). These distortions can occur also inside the human body. He divided the projectiles distortions into three classes, according to their degree of deformation: projectiles whose form remained unchanged, but its calibre diminished very little, projectiles whose calibre became irregular and increased in size and fragmenting projectiles.

There are also other data¹⁸ Iacobovici presented the weapons of war in this book. He asserted that all descriptions could help a surgeon to diagnose lesions depending on type of weapon. For Iacobovici not only the gravity of injuries, but also their prognosis depended on the type of firearms.

Estimating the correctness of the assertion that circulated at that time, about the "humanity" of armoured projectile, Iacobovici had the same opinion as Athanase Demosthen. In one of his studies¹⁹ he argued that it was impossible to consider that projectiles could have a human quality, because they did a lot of damages in the human body, as well as in the environment.

Concerning the subchapter entitled "The sanitary formations. Connection between them and between them and the respective command centres", Iacobovici stressed that during the war these links were mandatory. It is interesting to note the strictness and severity of indications he inserted in this regard.

Unsatisfied that "most of physicians ignore these duties" and to be more convincing for the readers of his book, Iacobovici gave several examples of cases for which "countless sanitary formations fell into the hands of enemies, not knowing that the units to which they belonged were in retreat". Thus, he reminded that at the battle from Warsaw proximity, where some German physicians had installed some hospitals in castles, "they found themselves captured by the Russians without knowing that the German armies had been beaten and they were in full retreat".

17. Athanase Demosthen was one of the well-known Romanian surgeons of the second half of the 20th century. He had a long career of military surgeon, crowned by the degree of brigadier general. He was also a professor of surgery at the Bucharest Faculty of Medicine. The results of his surgical experiments using the Manlicher gun allowed him to introduce the concept of experimental war surgery in Romanian medicine.

18. We do not want to mention all these data, because they are interesting only for a few readers.

19. The study of Athanase Demosthene has the title: "Experimental study on the action of Manlicher gun armored projectile" ("Etudes expérimentales sur l'action du projectile cuirassé du fusil Manlicher") and was published in 1894.

In the final subchapter, Iacobovici concluded that “a sanitary formation cannot function without a perfect service connection”.²⁰

Short overlook about the surgical indications for treatment given by Iacobovici

IN THE same book, he gave indications about different treatments of war lesions. We will not describe these treatments, because they can be analysed into a separate paper. However, we mention minimal data about these treatments, in order to provide a more complete understanding of the complexity of this book.

Iacobovici was a partisan of the aseptic surgery, but he used the antiseptics in abundance, both in suppurations of the complicated fractures and the most serious lesions. As basing principles, he recommended large incisions, removing of foreign bodies from the lesion, the drainage of wound, wash daily with 5% hydrogen peroxide or other disinfectants to reduce the suppuration. Then wash with water iodized. Therefore, he included at the end of the book a table entitled “Surgical therapeutic index”, where he included substances necessary in war surgery (disinfectants, substances for cauterization, haemostatic substances, but also sedatives, stimulants, anaesthetics, etc.), indications regarding the daily doses, route of administration and observations from his own experience.

Other activities done by Iacobovici in the field of war surgery

IACOBOVICI’S CONCERN for war surgery has been proven on various occasions. Thus, in April 1915, he and his colleague, Victor Gomoiu (1882-1960), requested the transformation of the optional courses that they taught at the Faculty of Medicine in Bucharest into compulsory courses for small surgery and surgery of war. Unfortunately, the faculty leadership did not follow this very useful application²¹. However, in 1914 Iacobovici wrote a coursebook of military surgery.

In 1916, he completed the book “War surgery” with the study entitled “New surgical war learning”.

In 1940, together with some surgeons from the “Brâncovenesc Hospital” in Bucharest, he wrote the “Surgical War Vademecum”.²²

20. I. Iacobovici, *Chirurgia de război*, 21-22.

21. Victor Gomoiu, “Anii 1914-1915” [The years 1914-1915], in “*Viața mea. Memorii*” [My life. Memories], vol. 1 (Craiova: Sitech Publishing House, 2006), 368.

22. Vasile Sârbu, *Pagini din istoria chirurgiei românești* [Pages of the Romanian history of surgery] (Bucharest: Romanian Academy Publishing, 2008), 430-431.

Iacobovici's prestigious professional evolution after World War I

AFTER THE end of World War I, Iacobovici developed a prestigious career at Cluj, then at Bucharest. In 1919, he became a professor at the newly created Romanian Faculty of Medicine from Cluj. Here he was also director of the Surgical Clinic²³, where he developed a rich clinical, didactic and scientific activity. He was the dean of this Faculty (1921/1922) and in the following academic year he was elected rector²⁴ of the University of Cluj (1922/1923). He founded the Romanian surgery school in Transylvania²⁵.

The final period of his successful career took place once again at the Bucharest Faculty of Medicine. In 1933, he took over the job of full professor and head of the Second Surgical Clinic of the "Brâncovenesc Hospital". During this period he held different important positions, such as founding member of the Academy of Medicine from Romania.

His retreat took place in 1949, when he was 70 years old.

Conclusions

THE BOOK "War Surgery" written by Iacob Iacobovici in 1915 was one of the most significant war medical publications in Romania during neutrality. In the following year he wrote another study, which completed the topics of "War Surgery". During his career Iacobovici continued to have an important preoccupation for war surgery.

In this volume Iacobovici insisted on the fact that war surgery must not be separated from general surgery, because surgical illness occurs all time, during peace time and during wars. The surgical data of this book are associated with aspects of forensic medicine and medico-surgical ethics.

In his book Iacobovici presented different war weapons and pointed out their effects. He insisted on the fact that it is necessary to know the type of war weapon for treating the lesions in a more accurate way. He had a very complex approach of war lesions, avoiding to omit even the smallest macroscopic lesion. An achievement of this book is that it presents the bindings that should exist between the health formations and between these teams and the headquarters.

23. In 1919 in Cluj was only one surgical clinic. Nowadays this clinic is entitled the First Surgical Clinic.

24. Thus Iacobovici became the first physician rector of the Romanian University from Cluj.

25. Cristian Bârsu, "Iacob Iacobovici. 1879-1959", in *Școala Clujeana de Medicină și Farmacie* [The Cluj School of Medicine and Pharmacy], Marius Bojiță, Oliviu Pascu, Honoriu Popescu and Cristian Bârsu, second edition (Cluj-Napoca: "Iuliu Hațieganu" University Medical Publishing House, 2004), 39-40.

THE JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE AND THE RELIEF OF RUSSIAN JEWS



GIUSEPPE MOTTA

Abstract

The Jews in the Russian Pale of Settlement resented from the consequences of the Great War from many points of view: the Russian military measures produced a great flow of refugees, while the repeated occupations of German and Russian armies impoverished these communities and created big damages to the Jewish populations, especially in Poland and Lithuania. This particular reality became the centre of the activities of many organizations, in Russia, Europe and also in the United States, for example the Joint Distribution Committee which operated through the American embassy in Holland and the Jewish local relief committees in Russia. The documents of the Joint Distribution Committee, therefore, could be very helpful to have a first-hand description of many Eastern European cities and of the reality in which many Jewish communities were living.

Keywords

Jews, Russia, Pogrom, Refugees, Relief

Introduction. The Jews in Russia

THE CONDITIONS of Jews in Tsarist Russia were strongly conditioned by the existence of the Pale of Settlement, which practically represented a sort of open-air prison for the majority of Russian Jews, who were concentrated in some “special” areas next to the western frontiers (almost the entire Ukraine including Bessarabia, Russian Poland and the Lithuanian and White-Russian provinces).

The overwhelming majority of these approximately six million Jews lived in the cities, where Jewish middle-class (traders, professionals, merchants, manpower) gradually moved during the last decades of the 19th century, but also in the village, the *Shtetl* (from the German words *Städtel/Städtle*”, that is to say “little town”), which was not a physical but a cultural space, representing the special Yiddish character of a good part of Eastern European Jewry.¹

This atmosphere staged the play of an incredible *coup de theatre* which would have tremendous consequences for their future in Europe: the Tsarist secret police commissioned a fraudulent pamphlet, the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, which was published in 1903. This forged text was proposed as the proof of a Jewish conspiracy to conquer global power through finance, economy and politics, masonry, disorder, destruction of religion.

In the same years, another dramatic episode of anti-Jewish violence occurred at Kishinev, during the 1903 Passover, where a brutal pogrom took place. It was soon followed by another wave of pogroms (Odessa, Bialystok, Melitopol, Feodosiya) during the first weeks after the publication of the October Manifesto following the 1905 revolution. As Robert Weinberg underlined, immediately after the Tsar's granting of fundamental civil rights and political liberties, pogroms, directed mainly at Jews, broke out in hundreds of cities, towns, and villages, resulting in deaths and injuries to thousands of people. In Odessa alone, the police reported that at least 400 Jews and 100 non-Jews were killed and approximately 300 people, mostly Jews, were injured, with some 1,632 Jewish houses, apartments, and stores incurring damage.²

1. On the history of Jews in Russia and Poland, see Semyon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russian and Poland from the Earliest Times until the Present Day*, vol. I (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1916), 408. See also, Evgenii Petrovich Semenov, *The Russian Government and the Massacres: A Page of the Russian Counter-Revolution* (London: Murray, 1907); Lucien Wolf ed., *Legal sufferings of the Jews in Russia* (London, 1912); *The Persecution of the Jews in Russia*, (London: Wertheimer, 1920); Ezra Mendelsohn, *Class Struggle in the Pale*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).
2. Samuel Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States from 1881 to 1910* (New York, 1914), 172; Bernard D. Weinryb, “East European Immigration to the United States”, *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 45, No. 4, (1955): 519.

Many authors, such as Cyrus Adler (one of the most energetic “activists” in the first decades of the 20th century), Samuel Joseph and Jonathan Frankel exhaustively pointed out how this turn of events had great consequences, not only in Russia, where the Jewish young generations increasingly adhered to radical movements, but also abroad.³ Discriminations and violence had the primary effect of increasing the emigration from the Tsar’s dominions, especially to the United States, where an important group of Jewish communities had established active organizations of charity and assistance.

Only a part of Jewish emigrants believed in Zionism and in the idea of creating their own state in Palestine, as proposed by Moses Montefiore and Theodor Herzl’s World Zionist Organisation (WZO).⁴ The emigration to the United States, on the contrary, increased during the period 1881-1910 and about the 90% of this flow came from Eastern Europe and especially from the Russian Pale of Settlement. In the Polish part of the latter, the feeling of anti-Semitism reached its most intense stage after 1912 when a split between the Polish National Democratic Party and the socialist Jews generated a harsh controversy and regarding Warsaw representative in the Russian Duma.

When the First World War broke out the problems of Russian Jews were aggravated by the dramatic coincidence of the Pale with the front where German, Habsburg and Russian troops started to fight. These problems were confirmed by the first information reporting about hundreds of Jews from Poland rushing to Lithuania in order to flee the frontier. Furthermore, the conditions of war troubled oversea emigration and caused a great mass of refugees in search of help and shelter in East-Central Europe or through Siberia and Japan. Unfortunately, the troubles were not generated only by battles and conflicts, but also by the reinforcement of the traditional hostility and by the rapid acceleration of the political crisis that had been affected Russia since the previous century.

3. Jonathan Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics: Socialism, Nationalism, and the Russian Jews, 1864-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1981).

4. The Zionist movement was started by T. Herzl, Chaim Weizmann and by other activists such as Arkadii Kremer, Chaim Zhitlovsky, Nachman Syrkin, Menahem Ussishkin and Ber Borochov. Theodore Herzl, *A Jewish state: an attempt at a modern solution of the Jewish question*, gave birth to the contemporary Zionist movement in 1896. Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism: From the French Revolution to the Establishment of the State of Israel*, (New York: Schocken Books Inc., 2003); A. Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader* (New York, 1959); Arthur Hertzberg (ed.), *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader* (New York: Cohen, 1976); Malcolm E. Yapp, *The Making of the Modern Near East 1792-1923*, (Harlow: Longman, 1987).

The Great War and Russian Jews

THE GREAT War represented an occasion for those Jews who hoped to reform Tsarist misrule and improve Jewish conditions. In many of the synagogues prayers were offered up for the success of the German army and it was not surprising, therefore, that many Jews viewed the Great War as the perfect occasion to change the situation of Russian Jews and, most of all, of the Tsarist Empire. Russian government was persecuting the Jews, suppressing and expelling them, seeking to separate the Jews from the Russians and crowding the former “into what has been styled the Pale of Settlement”: four million persons were compelled to live within these quarters, and this constriction was just a sign of a deep-rooted “cesspool of ignorance and superstition”, an “epidemic of nation-wide persecution and popular anti-Jewish hatred”.⁵

The enemies of Russia, Germany in particular, were fully aware of this state of things and tried to exploit the situation and re-address the hostility of Jewish people against Russian troops. In 1914 the German command inaugurated its strategy for conquering the sympathies of these Jews and received the help of the Zionist leaders Max Isidor Bodenheimer and Nahum Sokolow, and of associations such as the *Komitee für den Osten* and the *Mannesmann-Comité*. The German Committee for the Freeing of Russian Jews (*Deutsches Komitee zur Befreiung der russischen Juden*) was created in August 1914 while many leaflets were distributed by the German and Austro-Hungarian armies in the occupied zones of Poland together with a propaganda bulletin in Yiddish and Hebrew entitled *Der Emes*, reminding to the Jews (*An die Juden in Polen!*) of the constant anti-Jewish persecution in Russia.

Naturally, the Tsar tried to annul this potential menace and during the first months of the war issued a proclamation to his “dear Jews” and even decorated some of them, such as the Rabbi of Kovel (Volhynia), Bruk, in August 1914. On his part, the Jewish deputy of the Duma from the province of Kaunas, Naphtali Friedman, in the historic “war session” of the Russian Duma (August 8, 1914), assured the authorities and his colleagues that the Russian Jews would have gone to “the field of battle shoulder to shoulder with the other nationalities of the Empire”.

But Friedman’s words did not produce the right effect and resulted quite useless in fighting the secular “tradition” of diffidence and suspicions regarding the Jews as potential spies. As a matter of fact, the legal disabilities remained untouched and, albeit the generous promises of the Tsar, the first military measures of the army confirmed that hostility was still prevailing in the institutions.

The Eastern Front showed many particular features: it changed much more rapidly than the Western one and these continuous movements troubled the relief and aid of the victims. This emergence has been underlined by many historiographic works (Altshuler, Ansky, Bianchi, Gatrell, Goldin, Levene, Lohr, Prusin). Eric Lohr,

5. “War Items of Special Jewish Interests”; “Russia and the Jew”, *The Sentinel*, August 14, 1914.

in particular, reviewed the different dispositions that the Russian army adopted during the war and underlined how the latter were inspired by the vision of Jews as an unreliable element: spies or deserters who were to be removed from the zones of major strategic importance.⁶ As a consequence, military commands used the War Statute of 1914, and the unlimited powers that this act bestowed upon them, to “cleanse” certain areas from Jews, Germans and foreigners (who were all considered as potential spies) and to consequently adopt a gamut of different measures targeted at these particular groups. Lohr distinguished between four different phases of this policy beginning with the deportations or forced expulsions in July 1914-January 1915. During the second phase, this system was better organized with a circular (January 25, 1915) in which the commander in chief of the Army, Nikolaj Januskevic, instructed all the commanders to expel all Jews and suspect individuals from the entire region of military activity. In April-May 1915, the third phase commenced with larger scale mass deportations: in this case the deportees were assigned destinations in advance and the travels were better organized with the use of trains and the help of civilians. These measures, anyway, were not fully implemented owing to technical problems and to the lack of space where to deport the Jews: as a matter of fact, the great majority of the Pale of Settlement was under military control and only few zones remained available to concentrate the Jewish deportees. In addition to this lack of space, some civil and political authorities complained that this policy was impoverishing local economy, as removing the Jews in many cases meant a paralysis of certain economic sectors.

In this context, another practice was also used, the hostage-taking, which marked the passage to a new phase. As transferring whole populations generated many inconveniences, the commands ordered that deportation was to be replaced with hostage-taking, allowing the communities of deportees to return back home under the condition that hostages were to be taken from each group.

Deportations and hostage-taking declined in scale by the end of 1915, but the army commanders still retained the power of deciding forced expulsions and taking hostages, and many kept on using this prerogative also in the following years.

This whole of discriminatory measures created a legitimized framework for anti-Jewish violence which punctually broke out during the conflict. A large wave of pogroms began in 1915 and was “caused” by the Russian retreat and by the aggressiveness of some Cossack units, who often instigated to violence encouraging popular participation in looting and violence.

6. Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire. The Campaign against Enemy Aliens during World War I* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). See also, Alexander V. Prusin, *Nationalizing a borderland: war, ethnicity, and anti-Jewish violence in east Galicia, 1914-1920*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005); Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia during World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999); Samuel Goldin, “Deportation of Jews by the Russian Military Command 1914 – 1915”, *Jews in Eastern Europe*, (Spring, 2000): 40-73.

In May 1915, the Russian-Jewish Relief Committee (Ekopo) that was established in Petrograd as the central institution of relief, issued a report according to which in Poland there were at least 200 towns and about 9,000 townlets and villages that had suffered from the war, producing a big damage in terms of agricultural and industrial production. This document estimated that about two million Jews had been directly affected by the war: many of them had been forcibly expelled from their residence while others decided to flee but also to come back. In 1915, the Jewish deputy of the Duma, Friedman, complained that about half a million persons had been doomed to a state of beggary and vagabondage: in the province of Kaunas wealthy persons became beggars in few days while all the cities and the villages within and outside the Pale began to be crowded by an increasing number of refugees: "Among the refugees I met Jewish women and girls, who had worked together with Russian women, had sewed garments with them and collected contributions with them, and who were now forced to encamp on the railway embankment".⁷ The city of Smolensk, for example, witnessed the arrival or passage of great masses: 1,500 persons in June 1916, 6,500 in July, 8,600 in August.⁸

A special conference for the Organization of War Refugees was summoned by Jewish organizations in cooperation with the government and also this institution recorded a rapid increase of refugees. The account of March 1, 1916, for example, registered a total number of 185,596 refugees (on November 1, 1915, there were only 160,000) and in some places the situation was undoubtedly more serious. In few months, Vilnius (Wilna) passed from 1,135 to 3,166, Poltava from 5,366 to 10,842 refugees. The provinces of North-Western front-line (Vilnius, Vitebsk, Livonia, Minsk, Moghilev) hosted 53,534 refugees; those of the South-Western frontline were even more "crowded" (41,146 refugees in Ekaterinoslav, Poltava, Taurida, Kharkoff; 16,836 refugees in Bessarabia, Volhynia, Kieff, Podolia and Tehernigoff); the provinces of the interior or of the rear numbered 74,078 refugees.

In April 1916, the report of Ekopo took into consideration the number of 400,000 refugees. In March 1917, Dr. Otto Schiff, the Secretary of the Fund for the Relief of the Jewish Victims of the War in Russia based in London, wrote to the JDC estimating that one and a half million Jews lost their homes, at least according to the inquiries of the Russian Jewish Statistical society: 31% was settled in the war zone, 31% in South Russia, 16% in Central Russia, 16% in Volga provinces, 6% in Urals, Siberia and Central Asia.

Most of these wanderers found their way into larger cities such as Warsaw or Lodz where they increased the large number of unemployed and impoverished people. Other cities of the interior of Russia began to feel the forced invasion of

7. "Victory cheers Germany. Big Capture of Russians looked from Following Vilna's Fall", *New York Times*, September 22, 1915.

8. Michael C. Hickey, "Revolution on the Jewish Street: Smolensk, 1917", *Journal of Social History*, 31 (4), 1998: 826.

these homeless people and the respective governors often asked for a forced return of these refugees to their native places.

Naturally these flows were directed not only eastwards but also to the other side of the front, that is to say to those Austrian and German territories where the fugitives – especially from Galicia – hoped to find better living conditions. According to a report of the *Israelitische Allianz zu Wienn* (November 17, 1916), Bohemia hosted 75,135 refugees; Mahrend 31,344; East Silesia 7,000; Steiermark 4,000; Northern Austria 10,000; Vienna and Southern Austria 50,000; Western Austria 200,000. But these numbers were not destined to decrease, even if the policy of forced expulsions was partially abandoned, at least at the level of government policies. In fact, the conflict exacerbated the hostility between Poles and Jews and the attacks of Austrian and German troops were interpreted as the result of Jewish connivance: this suspicion consequently produced many problems where the Russian troops succeeded in driving their opponents back. Severe punishments were inflicted upon the Jews of the war zone who were charged for high treason according to the Polish accusations but were many times proved innocent by the witnesses. The Russian military authorities preferred to seek a scapegoat for their failures and to give Polish accusations wide circulation such as in the case reported by a military paper, “*Naš Vestnik*”, on May 5 (18) 1915 regarding Kuzhi. This village was attacked by Germans on the night of April 28, 1915: the local Jews were accused of helping the German invaders but the investigation of some deputies of the Duma discovered that in the entire village of Kuzhi there were only six Jewish families and that their houses were not so huge to host German soldiers as the previous accusations had underlined. Furthermore, these Jews had escaped before the arrival of the Germans and were residing in a near village during the attack.

But the history of Russian Jews during the war is full of atrocities, devastations and episodes of violence. Many of them are mentioned by the Šlojme-Zanvl Rappoport, who is better known as the Semën Akimovič An-skij, in the well-known *The Enemy at His Pleasure: A Journey through the Jewish Pale of Settlement during World War I* ⚭

The Jewish journalist, for example, described the Russian invasion of Brody, where a real “army of poor, ragged, famished kids” (Christians and Jews) walked through the ruins of the market begging for a *kopek*. Almost half of the town had been burned down, including several hundred Jewish houses and the old market place, which looked impoverished and dejected. Many stores, especially the bigger and richer ones, were locked or boarded up.⁹

9. Ansky stressed that every street received a new fancy name after Pushkin, Gogol, Lermontov, and Turgenev. Naming these horribly deformed streets after the luminaries of Russian culture was quite ironic and this irony had escaped the victors, who were not able to realize how offen-

Ansky also reported about the numerous falsehoods that he heard in the various localities, where the same “tales” were re-arranged and enriched time by time, always underlining the treason of Russian Jews: in one of these versions, an old Jew succeeded in transporting in a sack on his shoulders a German man and 2,500 silver thalers at a blockade of Russian troops.¹⁰

Another complete first-hand description of the conflict within the former Pale of Settlement (it was abolished in spring 1917) was drafted in 1918 by Albert Van Raalte, who left The Hague, in February 1918, went to Berlin and spent 75 days visiting the different localities and contacting the different Jewish communities in the German-occupied zone (the cities of Warsaw, Kaunas, Vienna, Vilnius).

“At Kowno I visited the Ludendorf kitchen with Mr.Struch. When leaving this place we passed two girls of about 16 and 12 years old. The youngest girl was carrying a pan of soup which she had fetched from the kitchen. The elder, we thought, had eaten her soup in the kitchen, and so we asked her whether she had enjoyed her meal, her answer was “I did not eat today, I had no money”.

In the home for the old people at Grodno I saw a woman, who six weeks previously had been taken up almost starved. Notwithstanding the careful treatment the poor woman was not yet recovered, hunger had undermined too much of her strength.

I shall give you the description of her outward appearance. In the Marx asylum at Wilna I saw a nice little boy. He was called “Friedrica”, whether the child’s parents were still living, they did not know, they did not even know his name. And this is the case with so many.

In a children-kitchen at Wilna I met a beautiful girl of 11 years old. I asked her why she did not go to school. Well, she said, because I must look after my four little brothers and sisters.¹¹

sive it was to the memory of those great Russian authors. Semyon Ansky, *The Enemy at His Pleasure: A Journey Through the Jewish Pale of Settlement During World War I*, (New York: Henry Holt, 2002): 68 ff.

10. Ansky, *The Enemy at His Pleasure*, 19.

11. Van Raalte’s final report was sent to Holland and New York on June 12, 1918. In the previous months Van Raalte had already transmitted some partial accounts of his trip, on March 1, 14, 27. JDC Archives, folder Overseas Administration, JDC Committees, Holland Bureau, June-December 1918, items 1051-1052. Giuseppe Motta, “The Jews of Eastern Europe and the Great War in the Documents of the Joint Distribution Committee”, *The First World War: Analysis and Interpretation*, vol.2, ed. A.Biagini - G. Motta, (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015).

The Action of Relief. The Joint Distribution Committee

THE SITUATION of Russian Jews created a tragic “humanitarian emergency” and was followed by the initiative of many national and international societies. First of all, the Russian Jewish communities prompted a set of relief measures and at Petrograd the Jewish Committee for the Relief of War Victims (Ekopo) was set up. It was structured into a coordinated whole of local committees and branches all over Russia and other existing societies such as the Society for the Advancement of Education among the Jews (OPE, created in 1863), the Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jewish Population (OZE, founded in 1912) and others.

But this intricate whole of societies, committees and organizations had to deal with many difficulties, first of all with a general lack of funds which was only partially covered by funds such as the Princess Tatiana Relief Fund and by the sums that the government provided only since 1915. The conditions of Russia were alarming and the widespread information regarding this catastrophe caused a quick race for charity and solidarity, for example in the United States, where a substantial community of Jewish immigrants from Russia had settled, in Great Britain and in other states such as France and Germany.

The American organizations immediately reacted to the tragedy of WW1 and the 1914 meetings of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) organized the structure of the funds and their destination focusing on Palestine and, at the same time, explaining that:

“our duty is not, however, confined to come to the assistance of the unfortunate Jews of Turkey, but the great body of Jews of Russia, Belgium, Austria-Hungary, and of other affected lands where for weeks past has occurred the most destructive warfare known to history, stand in grievous need, and must of necessity look to us for assistance” (Eighth Annual Report of the American Jewish Committee, November 1914).

Numerous appeals were arriving from Antwerp and from many European societies such as the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, the Anglo-Jewish Association, the *Israelitische Allianz* of Vienna, and to meet these needs the Committee reserved a sum of the emergency fund and issued a call for the establishment of a general relief fund.

In 1914, the US Ambassador to Istanbul, Mr. Henry Morgenthau, travelled to Palestine and, alarmed by the misery of the region, solicited an economic help from the United States. In a telegram, he talked about a “terrible crisis” and the menace of “serious destruction” which derived from the fact that the Turkish authorities compelled many Jews to join the army and many families remained

without any “breadwinner”, many of them moving to Constantinople. In August 1914, Morgenthau’s solicitations reached the leaders of the AJC, through the secretary of State W.J. Brian, and Jacob H. Schiff and Louis Marshall immediately got involved in order to respond to such an alarm. In a letter dated September 4, 1914, Morgenthau reminded L. Marshall of the Jewish conditions in Palestine:

“Most of them have always depended for their support on charitable institutions and benevolent men in other countries, and now that the inflow of money has absolutely ceased, most of the societies will have to be abandoned, and it is almost too horrible to think of what will become of the poor men that will be stranded high and dry”.

After Ambassador Morgenthau’s telegram, the American Jewish Committee called for a general meeting in New York, on October 25, and established the first committees to coordinate the work of relief. On November 24, 1914, the Joint Distribution Committee of American Funds for the Relief of Jewish War Sufferers (JDC) was finally formed joining the American Jewish Relief committee (expression of the New York elites) and the Central Relief committee (appealing to the Orthodox element). In August 1915, the People’s Relief committee (with a socialist orientation) was organized as the third member-organization of the JDC.¹²

But the JDC did not have the staff or the structures to get directly involved in this work of relief and had to rely on the existing societies and on the different committees that had already started their activities in the war zone. The work in Europe was carried out thanks to the US institutions such as the Departments of State and of War, which channelled the funds and organized a central committee – Max Senior and Doris Bogen were involved in this complex work of organization – in order to distribute and administer this money in Europe establishing the headquarters in the USA diplomatic mission in Amsterdam.

As a consequence, the first actions of the JDC consisted primarily in financing different associations in order to establish solid contacts within them. Financing was possible thanks to the funds that the American institutions and some special banks such as Kuhn, Loeb & Co. The financial support of the JDC continued in the following years and by the end of 1917, the JDC had transferred \$2,532,000 to Russia, \$3,000,000 to German-occupied Poland and Lithuania, \$1,532,300 to Galicia, and \$76,000 to Romania. These amounts proved that the first aids were soon implemented and represented just the beginning of a complex work of relief consisting not only in providing for immediate material aids, but also in creating the basis for the future reconstruction. Under this perspec-

12. Yehuda Bauer, *My Brother’s Keeper. A History of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee 1929-1939*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1974).

tive, the purpose of the JDC was briefly described by one of its agent, Mr. Zuckerman, “not merely to give bread, but to give the hope of a better life – to help our brothers over there to live again, to give them the means wherewith to live, and to enable them to live as Jews”.

The tasks of the JDC were particularly directed to the development and renewal of Jewish spirit and morale; to help build up cultural, benevolent, and technical institutions; to help integrate the various divergent groups and societies to a common purpose. In this context, the reconstruction could not be simply intended as the restoration of the devastated areas, but it included the aim to enable the victims of war to resume their life anew and to apply their own efforts for their rehabilitation.

At the same time, the relief should also strengthen the Jewish political field and “encourage” those communal activities that would tend to correct the old evils and abuses that had weighted down the life of Russian Jews, for example helping the Jewish welfare work in interlocking with non-Jewish welfare work. Only in this way it was thought that in the long run the morale and economic support of American Jews might prove to be even more valuable than their material support.

The American aids were particularly important in two sectors: the medico-sanitary organization, which lacked skilled Jewish physicians and surgeons as many of them had been sent to the front during the war, killed or incapacitated; the possible introduction of American industrial methods and machines among the artisans and industrial workers. These steps were considered essential to create the premises for a future peaceful and rapid development, and marked the passage from a policy of assistance to one of the first examples of what we call today “development aid”.

In the same period, analogous initiatives were flowering also in other countries, for example in England, where the troubles of Jews were associated to the debates concerning their patriotism, on the one side, and the alliance with Tsarist Russia, on the other.¹³ Here, a London Relief Fund was established, and soon the Anglo-Jewish Association prompted a whole set of measures not only to col-

13. Such correspondence was representative for a controversy that rumbled in the columns of the *Chronicle* and the *World* from late 1914. The JC, for instance, noted with evident disgust that in its annual report the AJA had unusually failed to make a single reference to the conditions faced by the Jews in Russia and Poland. By the end of October 1915, the Anglo-Jewish establishment had made relief in Eastern Europe its priority. It issued an urgent appeal for its newly formed Fund for the Relief of Jewish Victims of the War in Russia (its title mirrored its Russian partner). Leopold de Rothschild and Lord Swaythling (formerly Louis Montagu) were respectively named president and treasurer. Sam Johnson, “Breaking or Making the Silence? British Jews and East European Jewish Relief, 1914–1917”, *Modern Judaism* 30, 1 (2010): 95–119.

lect money for the relief of Eastern European Jews, but also to denounce the Russian ally and its treatment of Jews.

Other actions were taken by other associations such as the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in Paris or the *Israelitische Allianz* in Vienna, which pursued the same targets and contributed to alleviate, directly or through other committees, the conditions of the Eastern European Jewry. In the United States, an important contribution was rendered also by HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), which served not only for the reception of the last large influx of migrants, but also for securing permission from German and Austrian commands for residents of the military zones to write short messages to their families in the US.¹⁴ This assistance had an important moral value, as it resulted to be essential for those who had not received any word from husbands and relatives since the outbreak of the war.¹⁵ Furthermore, HIAS established a branch in Seattle, a port of arrival for Russian refugees, and up to December 1915 helped more than 13,000 Jewish refugees.¹⁶

The JDC played a crucial role in sustaining Jewish lives throughout the war zones, but it primarily focused attention on Palestine and those Eastern European countries with the largest populations of Jews at risk: Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Romania, and Latvia. At first, the JSC transferred funds and supplies to Jewish communities in need with the help of foreign consuls and relief organizations that were operating in those regions. The JDC shipped food, clothing, medicine, and money; supported soup kitchens and other meal programs for starving people; and enabled individual American Jews to send help to their loved ones abroad. These actions could be taken only thanks to the support of the American government, for example by approaching the American Secretary of the Navy, whose consent was necessary in order to infringe the blockade, and in March 1915, the JDC dispatched some \$1.5 million in relief, along with 900 tons of food and medicine, to Palestine on the ship *Vulcan*.

Furthermore, the JDC received permission from the US State Department to establish a transmission department (on January 1, 1915, under the supervision of Harriett Lowenstein) to deliver personal remittances to those areas where normal transmission agencies were not able to function because of the war, and to create a committee of Dutch representatives to administer relief funds to the European Jews in enemy-occupied countries. The support of the US government was evident when, at the urging of friends of the Jewish people in the United States Senate, after a resolution introduced by Senator Martine of New Jersey,

14. Lawrence J. Epstein, *At the Edge of a Dream: The Story of Jewish Immigrants on New York's Lower East Side, 1880-1920* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2001).

15. "Jews in Russia seek their friends here", *New York Times*, December 16, 1917.

16. "Report Great Work for Jewish Relief", *New York Times*, January 4, 1916.

President Wilson made January 27, 1916 the Jewish Sufferers Relief Day. On that day more than \$1 million was collected.¹⁷

This public support was absolutely necessary owing to the rigid conditions the conflict imposed on commerce, communications and transport of persons and goods. American agents in Europe had the fundamental role of carrying out this intense activity of relief: the American Ambassador to Petrograd, David R. Francis, was used by chairman Felix Warburg as a “middleman” for the communications with the Jewish Colonization Association in Russia, which received the first remittances, and the same role was played by other American consuls, for example in Stockholm.¹⁸ Naturally, the same strategy was adopted in the relations with the Russian consuls in the US, for instance with Hon. C.J. Medzakhovsky, the commercial attaché in New York, who was approached in order to obtain permission and fiscal exemptions for the passage of food and clothing in the port of Archangel.¹⁹

Also the support of the Federal Reserve was particularly important in order to direct the American money to Europe, and this attention was proved by many letters in which Ambassador Francis appears extremely involved in the distribution of funds and in its management, for example by approaching the leaders of local Jewish communities, providing for the budgets of the different Russian committees, rerouting the sums, or obtaining detailed information about the sanitary conditions in the Russian camps for prisoners of war.²⁰

The contributions had been collected since the beginning of the war and, it was estimated by Albert Lucas, they reached a per capita sum of more than \$6 each (considering a general Jewish population of 3 million people): naturally some contributors had significant means (Julius Rosenwald of Chicago donated \$1,000,000), but the great mass of collections was represented by moderate contributions from “those who had little if anything to spare above their own needs.”²¹

The money collected in the US was sent through the Kuhn & Loeb bank to Europe, where it was managed by the Dutch committee. Then the funds were dis-

17. On February 17, Wilson received the representatives of the Central Relief committee and of the Women's Proclamation Committee, who expressed him their most sincere gratitude. On January 27, during the Jewish Relief Day, the collections reached about \$2,000,000.

18. Letter of F. Warburg to D.M. Bressler, July 6, 1915. The remittances were arriving from the relatives all over the world, for example from Argentina. JDC Archives: Organization, 6709.

19. Document of January 16, 1916. JDC Archives: Russia, General 1916, 10047.

20. On May 15, 1916 Francis wrote to Paul Warburg (Felix's brother), a member of the Federal reserve board in Washington, thanking him because the federal reserve had greatly contributed to the mission in Russia and to his movements. On August 22, 1916, he explained to Felix Warburg how the American funds were distributed through the Jewish Colonization Association to committees in Petrograd and Moscow. JDC A, Russia, General 1916: items 10053, 10054.

21. Albert Lucas, “American Jewish Relief in the World War”, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 79, (1918).

tributed to local committees, such as the Russian Ekopo, which received money from the JDC to look after the refugees from the war areas, especially the ones who came from enemy (Austrian) territory, who were forbidden by the Tsarist government to receive help from Russian Jewish institutions.

In German-occupied Poland, the JDC could count on the help of the German Jewish aid society for Jews with the funds that were distributed through Hamburg and the bank of Max Warburg, Felix Warburg's brother.²² Having received the JDC's funds from Felix Warburg, Max Warburg then typically turned over a portion of the funds to the *Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden*, an established relief organization of well-to-do German Jews, and credited some of the monies to an account in Vienna via Maximilian Paul-Schiff, the committee's representative who, in his turn, re-directed them to the East Galicia committee in Lemberg which covered about 90 cities.

The money was distributed according to the needs of the different associations, called *landsmanshaften*, which solicited donations from their members in the United States. To receive this relief the different local organizations had to fill in a "Landsmanschaften questionnaire" indicating the name and the data concerning the organization, the legal representatives and other details. These documents were collected directly by the JDC agents in the second part of 1915 and distributed among the applicants.

The sums could be substantial (for example, \$200,000 were sent to Russia and \$200,000 to German-occupied Poland and Lithuania on October 10, 1916) or minimal in some residual cases when the help was directed towards little sporadic groups (the Jewish refugees in Alexandria received \$1,500 on July 14, 1916 for 4 months).²³ Furthermore, while this set of actions was referred to as "general relief", the transmission department established in 1915 to deliver personal remittances, provided for "individual relief" to those areas in Europe and Palestine where normal transmission agencies were unable to function under war conditions. In this way, the relatives from the West had to deposit small amounts of money (typically \$5 or \$10, up to \$100) for the JDC to remit to their relatives overseas.²⁴

In 1916, the relationships with Europe were more frequent and well-organized and the JDC sent some representatives directly to Europe: on July 26, Magnes sailed for Russia on the steamer *Frederic VIII* via Christiania and Stockholm,

22. These are the sums given to Germany in the first phase; up to December 31, 1915, 304,009.25 marks; January 1- July 25 1916, 3,758,769.89 mk; July 25-September 30, 1916, 2,417,641.84; totally 6,480,510.98 marks.

23. Financial Report of the Central Jewish Committee for Aiding War Victims (from the commencement of its activities to July 1916). JDC A., Russia general 1916, item 147.

24. The total number reported by A. Lucas in September 1918 included 24658 remittances reaching an amount of \$607,808.32. Lucas, "American Jewish Relief in the World War", 227.

returning on November 1. This kind of travel intensified during the following months and especially in 1917, after the Declaration of War against Germany on April 2.

Once America entered the war, the usual methods of distribution were cut off. The JDC sent its representatives (Boris D. Bogen and Max Senior) to neutral Holland to organize and oversee a branch office in The Hague obtaining the consent of the State Department on June 10. In this phase the most spectacular of the campaigns was undertaken in New York City, where an intensive campaign was led by Jacob Schiff and Jacob Billikopf reaching approximately \$5,000,000 and this initiative was the climax of the campaign to raise \$10,000,000 in 1917.

The American military intervention meant further obstacles in the relief work. After America's entry into the war the major problem was how to transfer money to areas under enemy control. Many authorizations to transmit funds to Europe were subsequently nullified by the Trading with the Enemy Act of November 2, and new permissions were required to send money to the regions under German occupation such as Poland and Romania. In this phase, the War Trade Board had to "license" every single remittance.²⁵

In accordance with the War Trade Board, the JDC sent more than five million dollars abroad in 1918, following more or less these steps: from the headquarters in New York to the State Department in Washington; from Washington to the US Ambassador to the Netherlands; then to the Dutch Foreign Ministry, to a committee of Dutch Jews, to Max Warburg, and then on to Poland and Austria as before. By the end of 1918, the JDC had managed to collect over \$16.5 million by perfecting fund-raising techniques, largely through the work of Jacob Billikopf, of the Kansas City Federation of Jewish Charities. The money was very carefully distributed in Austria and, after 1917, to those parts of Romania that could be reached and to the other areas of greatest suffering.²⁶ As for Russia, the situation was still more complicated for the 1917 revolutions made it increasingly difficult to transfer money to Petrograd. In September 1917, before the October Revolution, the JDC was able to successfully transfer money to Russia for the last time, but afterwards crucial messages of the JDC could reach Ekopo only with great delays. As a consequence, Ekopo had to borrow money through other channels, relying on the promise of JDC funds once the war and the revolutionary

25. For example, the authorization of August 24, 1917, to transmit funds was nullified on October 16, 1917. Item 150, 1918 Chronology. "Special arrangements announced by Albert Lucas to send remittances to Germany and countries occupied by Germany", *New York Times*, March 7, 1917.

26. The sum of 16.5 was mentioned by Y. Bauer, while another source referred to about 13.75 million dollars across Europe and the Near East during the war, Jaclyn Granick, "Waging relief: the politics and logistics of American Jewish war relief in Europe and the Near East (1914–1918)", *First World War Studies*, 51 (2014): 57.

tumult would pass. The relief funds sent since the outbreak of the war until July 31, 1918 were directed in particular towards Russia (\$2,812,300.00), Poland (\$5,376,662.98), Austria-Hungary (\$1,583,700.00) and Palestine (\$1,571,485.86) while only \$616,004.30 reached Turkey and \$135,900 Romania.²⁷

But the collection of funds continued even after the end of war, as it was clear that the consequences of the conflict were to be felt for many years. The initiatives were reiterated and, if possible, increased and, while the United War Work Campaign of New York sent to Europe \$700,000 in the first half of November 1918, in December it aimed to reach \$1,000,000.²⁸

Conclusions

AN OUTSTANDING, and at the same time paradoxical consequence of the conflict, was that the discriminations during the war produced the first virtual abolition of the Pale of Settlement, as in 1915, as a natural consequence of the war decrees, the Council of ministers permitted for the first time the Jews to move to the interior of Russia. This abolition, anyway, was considered by Jews just a temporary expedient, as it was dictated mainly by military necessity. In fact, the Jews could not be settled “satisfactorily” – without generating the protest of local non-Jewish communities and of the governors in the districts of destination – within the territories of the Pale and it was necessary to move them elsewhere.

This assertion was proved by a book published by the American Jewish Committee, which quoted the minutes of the Council of Ministers (August 4-17, 1915) clearly stressing that the necessity to such a measure was due to the growing flow of Jewish refugees and the unrest provoked by the latter.

A certain “sympathy” towards the Jewish situation increased only with the rise of liberals inside the Duma, especially in 1917, but before the Revolutions the government carried out no radical changes in the legal and material conditions of the Jews who were destined to live in a territory constantly subjected to the menaces of an invading army and to the destruction caused by war.

Naturally, the chaos which was increasingly affecting Russia did not contribute to helping the Jewish interests and also the recognition of Jews’ equal rights by the provisional government following February Revolution (legislation passed on March 21, 1917) did not meet a significant improvement of material conditions. On the contrary, the atmosphere even worsened and the liberal proclamations of the provisional government in 1917 were rarely followed by concrete changes. The anarchy that pervaded Russian troops had terrible consequences for the Jews

27. Lucas, “American Jewish Relief in the World War”, 228.

28. “To seek \$5,000,000 for Starving Jews”, *The New York Times*, November 25, 1918.

who were seen by the military units as Bolsheviks who were threatening the existence of Russia helping the Germans. The gravest phase of violence, as a matter of fact, commenced during the second part of the war, when the legally forced expulsions theoretically ceased but were replaced by new attacks and violence. As Dubnow pointed out concluding his 3 volumes about the history of Jews in Russia and Poland, the war “opened up before the Jewish people a black abyss of medievalism in the midst of the blazing light of modern civilization, and finally threw it into the flames of the gigantic struggle of nations”.²⁹ This phase produced a whole of serious consequences that continued to affect Jewish life also in the following years. As a matter of fact, while the opponents were signing armistices and peace treaties, the Jews of Eastern Europe did not experience any truce and “assisted” to the Russian Civil War and the Russo-Polish War, being affected by continuous violence and increasing misery. This turn of events produced a great wave of refugees who moved Westwards and represented a first “demanding job” for the new international institutions (the League of Nations established a High commission for refugees in 1921).

The violence of the conflict was repeated endless times and the years after 1918 recorded tragic and bloody pogroms that were carried out by troops of the White and the Red Armies, by Petljura’s Ukrainian “patriots”, by the Polish army in the occupied Eastern territories. The conflict, thus, had a special meaning for the Jews of Eastern Europe. On the one side, it interrupted a secular history of “forced residence” and oppression creating for them a complicated storm of different perspectives, which ranged from Zionism or emigration to Bolshevism. On the other hand, the war opened a phase of humanitarian emergency that recalled the attention of foreign organizations such as the Joint Distribution Committee. The relief was extraordinary and maybe for the first time it was not only directed towards the concession of material aids, but it also aimed to create the basis for a future reconstruction. Unfortunately, this reconstruction too met new serious hurdles and for many Eastern European Jews it was not followed by a substantial improvement. The experience of the JDC during WW1, anyway, would be extremely helpful also three decades later and became one of the most outstanding of solidarity and relief in favour of the victims of war.

29. S. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland from the Earliest Times until the Present Day*, vol. 3, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1920).

BETWEEN SADNESS AND AGONY

Disease and Death behind the Front Line



DANA-EMILIA CÂMPEAN
MARIA AURELIA DIACONU

Abstract

War places people in exceptionally difficult circumstances, giving rise to reactions, facts, attitudes, judgements that do not pertain only to the event per se, but also to differences between civilisations, peoples, mentalities, mores, traditions, beliefs, education, stages of historical evolution, etc. In the present study, we aim to present the situation of the civilians, those from behind the front line, in Transylvania and Oltenia during the period 1916-1919. Our main focus will be the manner in which war and the army have influenced and altered the structures of daily life. We will exemplify the ways in which requisitions of food and regularly used products, setting the prices to a certain level, the problem of firewood, the limitations on meat consumption and other such factors resulted in the population's attrition. In order to write our paper we have used the period's press, both from Transylvania and from Oltenia, archival documents, memoirs and specialised bibliography referring to the period and subject had in view.

Keywords

World War I, Transylvania, Oltenia, disease, exploitation, interdictions.

NO MATTER how we classify them, global or local, just or unjust, of aggression or of defence, wars remain historical phenomena contradictory to human nature. War places people in exceptionally difficult circumstances, giving rise to reactions, facts, attitudes, judgements that do not pertain only to the event *per se*, but also to differences between civilisations, peoples, mentalities, mores, traditions, beliefs, education, stages of historical evolution, etc.

This war-specific reality is also encountered in the Romanian area. Regardless of the historical province we are referring to, war generated fear and anguish, but also an intense fight for survival.

In the present study, we aim to present the situation of the civilians, those from behind the front line, in Transylvania and Oltenia during the period 1916-1919. Our main focus will be the manner in which the war and the army influenced and altered the structures of daily life. We will exemplify the ways in which requisitions of food and regularly used products, setting the prices to a certain level, the problem of firewood, the limitations on meat consumption and other such factors resulted in the population's attrition.

In order to write our paper we have used the period's press, both from Transylvania and from Oltenia, archival documents, memoirs and specialised bibliography referring to the period and subject had in view.

Starting with the autumn of 1916, after the invasion of the German-Austro-Hungarian troops south of the Carpathian Mountains, the population from Oltenia was subjected to unprecedented situations, and the horrors of the war left their mark on all the structures of daily life. Ever since the news regarding Romania's entry into the war spread, joy and worry coexisted amongst the population. Nicu Angelescu, a professor and lawyer from Vâlcea, remarked that although "the moment I had expected for such a long time had arrived at last, I was not able to understand, however, why not everybody is content and why has fear entered, apparently all of a sudden, everyone's soul (...) all around me, I saw only troubled faces"¹. The country's occupation by the German-Austro-Hungarian troops, shortly after Romania entered the war, contributed to the increased level of concern in the midst of the civilian population.

The first reaction to the occupation was the population's retreat to areas that were at bay from the war. Such an episode was recorded by I. G. Duca: "The spectacle of the roads was indescribable: men, women, children, ill ones, old people, crippled, on foot, in carriages, in carts, on horseback, they travelled in the rain, wind, cold, snow. Some had gathered in a hurry what they could from their belongings and were dragging it after themselves. Others could no longer advance and fell drained of powers and starving along the roads. Others died in the ditches and

1. Nicolae Angelescu, *Memoriile unui om obscure* (Râmnicu-Vâlcea: Adrianso, 2005), 112.

their decaying bodies were left for the crows to prey upon”². This sight was one of inferno also because the civilian population was mixed with the convoys of the retreating army, “the soldiers, in their haste to pass through in order to execute the orders they had, toppled everything that was in their way, in this manner terrible jumbles were born, in the distance the enemy’s fire was heard, children were screaming, women were crying, people were shouting, the rain wouldn’t cease, the frost was getting stronger, in one side a village was bombarded, in another you could see the flames of a fire”³. However, the largest part of the population remained on the spot and, in one way or another, had to deal with the horrors and especially with the challenges brought about by the war.

Karl Rosner, a German war correspondent, was shocked by the attitude of Craiova’s inhabitants who did not feel intimidated by the presence of the victorious German troops that had entered the town. According to his testimony, the locals manifested a servile, disgusting submissiveness, which even made them use the occupiers’ language: “they all speak German, forcing us to admire the extraordinary talent they have. Five days ago they knew only Romanian and French. Less than four days have passed since we entered the town and look how their tongue became loose and they now speak German like it’s something natural”⁴.

The country’s organisation was initiated immediately after the occupation, having in view the norms established in Berlin, which had been previously applied in Belgium and Serbia. At the central level, a military governor was appointed and military commandments, divided into stage commandments and stage stations, were established for each county. In the Vâlcea and Romanați counties the commandment was Austrian, while in the other three counties of Oltenia it was German.

The county commandments’ attributions were to maintain order, to ensure circulation on the roads, to control the population and especially to economically exploit the county with the help of the economic personnel pertaining to the General Headquarters. From the viewpoint of organising the military police, a central district at Craiova and police bureaus in the county capitals were established.

Occupation during wartime is also motivated by economic reasons. The aim was the exploitation of all goods, resources and services that could serve the German-Austro-Hungarian troops. In order to facilitate the exploitation, “The Romanian national economy” (*Die rumänische volkswirtschaft*) was printed in Berlin starting with January 1917. In this publication the economic General

2. Florin Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră a poporului roman* (Bucharest: Univers Enciclopedic, 1997), 281.
3. F. Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră*, 281-282.
4. Karl Rosner, “Craiova în prima zi a ocupației, 21 noiembrie 1916”, *Arhivele Olteniei* 1, No. 4, 1922, 361.

Headquarters found exhaustive information about all the economic resources. The list of useful publications also included a dictionary of Romania with an economic, administrative and political profile, issued in four volumes, one for each of the country's provinces⁵.

Across the Carpathian Mountains, **Transylvania** faced a similar situation. A state of joy and worry, both installed at the same time, was characteristic amongst the population: "The war's wrath descended upon us. More terrible than we could have imagined it. Tens of millions of the peoples' prime are put to fire and sword on the battlefields and at home sorrow in the souls and material ruin above which floats the ghost of the diseases that will come from the atmosphere infested with human corpses. It's the greatest war from all [the wars] the world had since it's a world"⁶.

The Austro-Hungarian army adopted the same policy of occupying and reorganising the territory according to its own rules, which contravened the Romanians' lifestyle. We can notice right from the start the men's massive departure to the front, in a war that was not their own and which should have lasted for a few months, but was then prolonged by another 2 years. The consequences of recruitments were felt both in the long and in the short run in the massive drop in birth rate, in the workforce at home, on the fields, in the factories, etc. Although in the beginning conscriptions had in view men aged 24 to 36, young men of 17-19 years of age were next⁷! The recruitment orders followed one another at a rapid pace. In May 1915, those aged 18 were called to arms and those between 45 to 50 years old were forced to become infantrymen. An interesting fact, in the spring of the same year even the nomadic Gypsies are mentioned! Moreover, those aged 21 to 42 and who had previously been declared "unfit", as well as pedestrians who were 18 years old were called to recruitment. The following year, starting with April, pedestrians aged 19 to 50 were warned that they will be inventoried. This time the order also had in view those for whom active military service was not compulsory and stipulated the right of aspirants for priesthood to enlist as volunteers for one year and the conscription (*asentare*) of those suffering from epilepsy. With each passing year the age for recruitment was lower, thus, in January 1917, 18-year-olds and, from 1918, pedestrians aged 18 to 24 were called to arms⁸. From a demographic viewpoint, the war affected population dynamics: the number of marriages and births decreased during the interval 1915-1918.

5. Ilie I. Georgianu, *România sub ocupațiune dușmană. Exploatarea economică a țării. Organizarea și activitatea statului major economic* (Bucharest: Tipografia "Cultura Neamului Românesc", 1920), 18.

6. *Biserica și Școala*, 38, No. 31, 3/16 Aug. 1914.

7. Eugenia Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale asupra primului război mondial* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2004), 98.

8. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 99.

Mortality in Transylvania registered various levels throughout the war and was mainly due to natural selection and starvation, followed by epidemiological causes – the Spanish influenza which made victims all over the continent⁹. The period's press contains advice given to priests regarding the manner in which to provide their parishioners with information about the Spanish flu as part of the Sunday service.

In addition to these aspects that pertain to the population's quality of life, the army instituted a drastic requisitioning programme. In Transylvania, the population was urged to make voluntary donations for the army's benefit starting with August 1914. To this end, two offices were established in Vienna and Budapest by order of the War ministers: "The Hungarian Minister of infantry and the Austrian Minister of infantry, as central authority, in aid of the entire army"¹⁰. Persons belonging to the villages' elite were employed in these offices: priest, notary public, teacher, wealthy peasants and they dealt with requisitions, tax collections, distribution of war aids¹¹, providing information to the population, etc.

The press represented a powerful means of conveying information and propaganda to citizens. For example, the journal *Biserica și Școala* advised priests and teachers to verify market prices for cattle, cereals and for all the articles sold by peasants, so that the latter would not be exploited by speculators. It is well known that the army started purchasing horses, oxen and foodstuffs from all over the country, on both sides of the Carpathian Mountains, ever since it was mobilised. The sellers, most of them peasants, were given in exchange for the goods they sold not cash, but bonds (*asignațiuni*) that people could immediately cash in at the state's money offices. Often, being unaware of the rules, the peasants risked being fooled by certain individuals who bought their bonds at a low price arguing that the payment was going to be made only when the war ended and were thus deceived¹².

As we have previously mentioned, *Revista Economică* has provided us with a rich material regarding the requisitions carried out by the Austro-Hungarian army in Transylvania. "The Quartermaster Corps of the Military Commandment from Sibiu is going to take care of" the procurement of the products necessary for feeding the troops and the army's mobilised institutes. The payments were established

9. Sorina Paula Bolovan, Ioan Bolovan, "Mutații demografice în Transilvania în anii Primului Război Mondial", in *Mișcări de populație și aspecte demografice în România în prima jumătate a secolului XX*, ed. Sorina Paula Bolovan, Ioan Bolovan, Rudolf Gräf and Corneliu Pădurean (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007), 77; (available at <http://dspace.bcucuj.ro/handle/123456789/47856>, accessed on 15.01.2016).

10. *Biserica și Școala*, 38, No. 32, 10/23 Aug. 1914.

11. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 100-101.

12. *Revista Economică. Organ financiar-economic. Organul financiar al „SOLIDARITĂȚII”, asociațiune de institute financiare ca însoțire* (hereinafter: *Revista Economică*), 16, No. 32, 8 Aug. 1914.

by the Ministry of war and the transportation was to be done in sacks, barrels or crates at the stations: Sibiu, Braşov, Cluj, Alba Iulia, Mureş-Oşorhei. The products that were requested first were: flour, rice, leguminous plants, barley, millet, dried vegetables, coffee, tea, pepper, clove and fodder for the animals.¹³

The purchase or sale of the future harvest of cereals, oily seeds and potatoes was forbidden in Austria by means of a ministerial decree. The other agricultural and gardening products, especially wine and fruits, were not affected by the decree. The violation of this directive was punished with a fine of 600 korona or imprisonment of up to 2 months. The decree was also applied for the harvest of 1916.¹⁴

The same situation is encountered in Oltenia as well, but the conditions here are even harsher, because no agricultural product is exempted from the German law. A number of orders brought in force the prohibition of export for cereals, animals, food, wines, liquors, fodder, as well as their trade on the internal market without the approval of von Mackensen, the supreme commander of the army corps, or that of the military administration of Romania.

South of the Carpathian Mountains, the living conditions of the population became worse partly due to the poor crop yields of 1917. Moreover, the small quantity of food that existed was requisitioned and rationed out by the occupier. The same situation characterised the year 1918 as well. On 29 June 1918, a printed order of the Commandment of the von Mackensen army corps was disseminated throughout the entire country, an order that stipulated that the surplus of all the agricultural products from Romania that came from the harvest of 1918 was to be delivered to the occupying authorities.¹⁵ Disobeying these orders was harshly punished. Nicolae Stoian, a baker from the town of Drăgăşani, was fined because he sold bread and because he had a stock of cereals, while Dumitru Mustaţă also had to pay a sum of money because he did not deliver his harvest of sunflower on the set date.¹⁶

The exploitation plans were created for the long run. Through a series of decrees, measures were taken in order to cultivate the vast plains from the southern part of the country. Thus, in the spring of 1917, the inhabitants of villages from montane areas were forced to participate with their own animals, carts and harnesses in the agricultural actions under way in the plains.¹⁷ Most of the vehicles and animals that were used became part of the patrimony of the occupying armies.

13. *Revista Economică*, 16, No. 33, 15 Aug. 1914.

14. *Revista Economică*, 18, No. 15, 8 Apr. 1916.

15. Vâlcea County Branch of the National Archives of Romania (*Direcţia Judeţeană Vâlcea a Arhivelor Naţionale*; hereinafter DJVAN), Fund Primăria comunei Olăneşti, File 1/1918, 175-176.

16. DJVAN, Fund Prefectura judeţului Vâlcea, File 9/1918, 423.

17. DJVAN, Fund Prefectura judeţului Vâlcea, File 16/1917, 26, 155.

Selling fruits and producing plum brandy were no longer permitted. Plums and other fruits were given a new use, as they were to be either dried in special machines or turned into marmalade. A factory for producing marmalade functioned in Craiova. Nothing went to waste, even rotten fruits were requisitioned.¹⁸ These seemed to be available, especially after their price was raised to a level that made them inaccessible to the market.

The requisition of birds and animals strongly affected the population from both Romanian provinces. Alongside the role played as part of the alimentation, large animals were used in agricultural activities and their lack brought about grave prejudices to this domain.

The army's beef consumption was assessed to 6-7,000 animals/day. This exorbitant quantity led to a decrease in the number of both dairy cows and especially yoke oxen.¹⁹ It is estimated that the number of cattle dropped by 2 ½ million head/year owing to mass requisitions. Only in the Mureș-Turda county the number of horses decreased by 50% and that of bovines by 17%.²⁰

South of the Carpathians, the measures carried out by the occupying troops were even more callous, as the right to slaughter animals was lost. This interdiction also referred to lambs and birds. When butchering lambs was fortuitous, the meat and skins had to be handed over to the military occupying authorities. The German commandment ordered a monthly and quarterly census of all animals and birds possessed by the inhabitants. Each citizen was obligated to surrender to the commandment the quota of birds or eggs with which he or she was registered at the beginning of the quarter. Even if the birds died, the delivery to the authorities was compulsory. The archive of the Craiova city hall holds hundreds of petitions from citizens who revealed that they had been unfairly imposed upon as the birds had died and who requested to be exempted from such impositions.²¹

Moreover, the press announced the ever more acute lack of firewood in the entire country, alongside a shortage of food of all categories. Within this context, the state issued a decree (No. 2972/1915) by which it stipulated the compulsory declaration of any firewood supplies: "They are obliged to announce, directly to the Central Statistical Bureau of Budapest, the reserves of firewood that they have and those that they will subsequently produce or buy: producers and sellers of wood"²². The problem of firewood remained constant throughout the

18. Virgiliu N. Drăghiceanu, *707 zile sub cultura pumnului german* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1920), 165.

19. *Revista Economică*, 17, No. 34, 21 Aug. 1915.

20. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 102.

21. Ion Călin, "Ocupația germană la Craiova în anii 1916-1918", *Studii și articole de istorie*, VIII (1966): 302.

22. *Revista Economică*, 17, No. 34, 21 Aug. 1915.

war, turning into a veritable crisis in this respect: "The cause of this state, almost inexplicable in a country so rich in vast centuries-old forests is the lack of manpower for cutting the wood in the forest and then the lack of the necessary animals for the wood's transportation. The government itself started to take this matter into its own hands, a matter of capital importance for the largest strata of the population. Amongst other things, prisoners of war will be placed at the disposal of the producers of firewood for the execution of the operations of cutting and transporting the wood"²³.

The interdictions concerning firewood also affected the population of Oltenia. Here requisitioning the wood had caused the lack of materials used for heating, a fact that had as a result numerous deaths caused by hypothermia. In the meantime, in the sawmills of Brezoi wood was exploited intensively²⁴, even by using the forced labour of the inhabitants from the montane and submontane areas of the Vâlcea county.

In both these Romanian provinces, namely Transylvania and Oltenia, the authorities introduced ration books for restricting food consumption. This measure affected the state of the population, whose living conditions degraded considerably. Thus, starting with July 1915, meat consumption was limited in Transylvania. On Tuesdays and Fridays it was forbidden to sell or put into circulation beef, veal or pork; poultry was not mentioned. Within this sombre context, the consumption of horsemeat grew alarmingly, alongside with that of its derivative products, but also its price. Rations were imposed for possessing cereals for one's own consumption: 10 kg/person/month²⁵, while the rest was to be ceded to the state; closely linked to these measures, the quality of bread depreciated by the use of a number of admixtures that could hardly be put into practice.

At the beginning of 1916, bread and flour ration books were introduced in Transylvania. From 1917, ration books for soap were also in use, each person having the right to 400 g of domestic soap/month. In the long run, these restrictions have had in view, starting with 1917, to forbid the commercialisation of any kind of fat and the use of fat for cooking on Mondays and Fridays²⁶.

In Oltenia, the drastic ration book regime allowed for only 300 g of meat per person per week. Three days a week it was forbidden to sell meat, while inhabitants who reached their 60th birthday did no longer have the right to meat received on the basis of the ration book. The same strict regime was also applied for bread consumption, which was reduced to less than 300 g/person/day²⁷.

23. *Revista Economică*, 17, No. 47, 20 Nov. 1915.

24. Petre Bardășu, "Din istoricul exploatărilor forestiere de pe Valea Lotrului", *Studii Vâlcene*, I (1971): 27.

25. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 109.

26. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 112-113.

27. Călin, "Ocupația germană", 301.

In both regions, citizens suffered from the requisitions of sheep-, lamb- and goatskins. Moreover, the newspapers printed orders that targeted the reduction of candle use in churches. One can thus deduce how draconian the life regime became for the population, its health status being situated at the borderline between life and death. Diseases spread easily, epidemics and viruses claiming victims at a rapid pace. The problem of the lack of food and the insufficiency of first necessity products was very grave since, in the spring of 1917, the authorities demanded statistics of the starving people for each village.²⁸ Alongside the ever more obvious lacks caused by requisitions and by the months of war that were accumulating, the passage of the Austro-Hungarian troops and the Russian invasion drained the Romanian villages and the food reserves to such an extent that “the people is on the verge of leaving home due to the lack of living means”²⁹.

The requisitions had in view all the belongings owned by the population. In the towns of Oltenia the German authorities put into practice measures that were so drastic that the population reached the limit of what could be tolerated.

In Craiova all the carriages that were in a good state were taken away and entire train cars were filled with furniture and sent to Germany.³⁰ The exploitation of resources was so dire that the Commandment of the 270 Squadron from Râmnicu-Vâlcea set the quantity of bed linen that each family should possess, the surplus having to be surrendered to the occupying administration, under the threat of harsh punishments³¹.

The villages and towns from Oltenia have suffered very much from requisitions and from the brutal behaviour of the occupiers. The lack of food led to hunger and to the outbreak of various epidemics, which favoured an increase in mortality.

The population's morale became considerably worse also due to the fact that the German and Austro-Hungarian authorities resorted to a series of intimidation measures, one of which being that “persons of note are forced to clean the park and to sweep the streets”³². In this manner, the fiercest fears were inoculated to the common people in case of insubordination.

A series of fundamental human rights were violated, such as the freedom of movement, the right to education, etc. At the beginning of 1917, a decree issued by Mackensen stipulated that civilians were not allowed to travel by train. However, by decree No. 125 of May 1917, travelling without a pass was permitted, with

28. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 102.

29. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 114-115.

30. Alexandru Marghiloman, *Note politice*, Volume II: *România și primul război mondial (1914-1919). Războiul (1916-1917)* (Bucharest: Machiavelli, 1994), 127.

31. Sergiu Purece, “Lupta maselor populare din județul Vâlcea împotriva ocupației germano-austro-ungare (1916-1918)”, *Studii Vâlcene*, 4 (1980): 64.

32. N. Georgescu, *În puterea „pumnului de fier”* (Iași: Editura Tipografiei P. Iliescu, 1917), 95.

the exception of the routes Craiova – Târgu-Jiu, Craiova – Strehaia and Craiova – Băilești.³³ Nevertheless, the right to travel was granted only to those who were compelled to do so by economic reasons, but the number of seats for civilians remained rather limited throughout the occupation.

The population was subjected to a regime of strict control. To that effect, a decree specified that “all Romanian males born between the years 1877-1901; all those who have participated in the war as enemies and have not been informed, including also the Romanians; all enemy foreigners, of both sexes, starting with the age of 15; all males, without protection, who are over 15 years old, are to be placed under the surveillance of the Control Bureaus that were established in Romania, to which bureaus and according to whose disposals they must report once a month”³⁴.

The German hour started to be employed, a fact that caused numerous inconveniences to the population. As one contemporary remarked, “since the occupation, we no longer have the right not even to our seasons or to the hours of our days. The clocks will be set one hour ahead starting with that day. Instead of two o’clock it will be three”³⁵. The hour change created tensions between the civilian population, which obviously functioned according to the hour they were accustomed to, and the German administration, which organised its time according to the new hour. Within this context, some absurd measures were taken, as it happened in Craiova, where owners were fined for their dogs’ barking, since the latter disturbed public order³⁶.

Solidarity and the population’s resistance

ALTHOUGH IT was subjected to intimidation, requisitions and all sorts of abusive measures, during the two years of occupation the civilian population resorted to numerous actions of disobedience. As a result, the battles were no longer fought only on the front, but also by those who had remained at home and who did everything within their power to resist the occupiers’ demands.

The inhabitants reacted by disobeying in the case of forced labour, by refusing to comply with requests and ransacking actions, by not carrying out the orders and disposals of the occupier, by spreading news that were unfavourable to the Central Powers, by not surrendering arms and ammunition, by sabotaging railways, phone and telegraph lines, etc.

33. Georgescu, *În puterea „pumnului de fier”*, 34-36.

34. Georgescu, *În puterea „pumnului de fier”*, 89-90.

35. Drăghiceanu, *707 zile*, 150.

36. Drăghiceanu, *707 zile*, 150.

The fire that entirely destroyed the sawmill from Brezoi of the “Lotru” Society must be regarded as another sabotage act. This factory was requisitioned by the Germans and for its functioning they used the forced labour of the county’s inhabitants³⁷.

Another form of resistance was represented by the attacks on enemy patrols or groups. The administrator of the Melinești County, for example, reported to the Dolj prefecture on an assault that had occurred on the night of 21 to 22 June 1917 on some German soldiers stationed near the Talpașu village. One of the soldiers was killed, but the authors of the attack were not identified³⁸.

The most straightforward manner to act against the enemy remained spreading false news that would raise the Romanians’ morale, while concomitantly misleading the occupiers. A number of actions against the occupier carried out by a series of brave women were also signalised. Some of these women were involved in gathering and transmitting information about the enemy’s occupying forces to the Romanian army. This was the accusation that led to the apprehension, conviction and deportation of: Zoe Stănculescu from Caracal, Aneta Petre from Turnu-Severin, Rica Bărbulescu from Mehedinți, Elena Gh. Ghețu from Bălbați (Gorj), etc.³⁹

By far, the most well-known form of action from Oltenia belongs to the partisans from Gorj and Mehedinți counties, led by Victor Popescu. He mobilised stray soldiers from the mountains and the civilian population in order to organise a powerful resistance force in Oltenia. The actions of sublieutenant Victor Popescu were some of the most courageous and daring ones initiated by Romanians during World War I and he became very popular. Victor Popescu disguised himself as a shepherd or a monk, visited villages and gathered information concerning the population’s morale and its reaction to the occupier’s abuses. He managed to organise an extended network of collaborators, alongside whom he set traps for the enemy patrols that roamed the villages and robbed the inhabitants.

On the other hand, war represented a favourable time for women’s reunions, which could become actively involved in helping soldiers from the front line, the wounded men sent back home, but also other civilians, orphans, war widows, etc. The reunions’ uninterrupted activity constantly contributed to the war effort, becoming a never-ending source of aids and supplies for the needy. Firstly, we mention that, at Cluj, a hospital with 15 beds and an ambulance were established,

37. Purece, “Lupta maselor populare”, 67.

38. Luchian Deaconu, Vladimir Osiac and Ileana Petrescu, *Documente privind problema țărănească din Oltenia în primele două decenii ale secolului al XX-lea* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste, 1970), 231-232.

39. Maria Totu, Doina Smârcea, “Femeile române în lupta pentru independența națională a țării”, *Anale de istorie*, 3 (1977): 134-135.

the wounded persons benefiting from free of charge, complete care, medical treatment and bandages. The hospital was organised with the support of the women's reunion, of the "Economul" Institute of Cluj and of the town's branch of ASTRA and was the first of its kind from the Dual Monarchy⁴⁰.

The women's reunion from Hațeg "gathered from its members and from other noble souls thousands of korona. It has gathered from our merciful peasant women a large pile of sheets, linen and food, from its members all sorts of gifts offering them with love to the consolation and relief of our heroes and of their families left without support and aid"⁴¹.

The model of women's reunions from the entire Monarchy and from over the Carpathians was Queen Marie of Romania, actively involved in the war, perhaps more than she should have been, caring for soldiers on the battlefield, as part of the Red Cross. She subsidised and administered this ambulance service and established a set of medals (Sanitary Cross Queen Marie) in order to reward various forms of sacrifice in the sanitary domain.⁴²

Propaganda by means of the press was a very aggressive one and the targeted public, namely women, was very receptive when it came to contributing, materially or through work, to helping the families of those on the front. Similarly, women were advised to become members of the Red Cross and tend the wounded. In Arad, this task was assumed by "The Reunion of Romanian women"⁴³.

The women's reunion from Bistrița implemented two collections for helping 104 Romanian families that barely managed to subsist and intended to set up a kitchen where the poor could eat for free⁴⁴.

Alongside fund-raising and instituting soup kitchens, women's reunions managed to bring some joy to the wounded soldiers treated in hospitals throughout Transylvania. Such an example is that of the Women's reunion from Turda, as thanks to it "each soldier has received a symbolic white cake for Christmas and a package containing a handkerchief, a pack of tobacco, cigarette paper, matches, postal cards, crayons, apples and a prayer book and other brochures and at the end a cup of tea with rum. Surprised by these gifts, the hospital's director Dr. Borbely exclaimed: 'We (Hungarians) were once again surpassed by the Reunion of Romanian women!'"⁴⁵. We should also remark the gesture of wealthy women from all around the Monarchy who donated their jewellery in the benefit of the

40. *Revista Economică*, 16, No. 36, 5 Sept. 1914.

41. *Revista Economică*, 18, No. 8, 18 Feb. 1916.

42. Maria Bucur, "Între mituri, icoane și tăceri. Femeile române în primul război mondial", in *Cine suntem noi? Despre identitatea femeilor din România modernă*, ed. Mădălina Nicolaescu, localitatea: Anima, 1996, 42.

43. *Românul*, 4, No. 163, 25 Jul. / 7 Aug. 1914.

44. *Românul*, 4, No. 180, 17/30 Aug. 1914.

45. *Românul*, 6, No. 25, 4/17 Feb. 1916.

wounded, of widows, of war orphans. “Eugenia Rațiu and Olimpia Moldovan have collected for the wounded from the hospitals of Turda 216 korona 16 fillérs”⁴⁶.

In addition to women’s reunions, the Scouts of Blaj were the authors of a collection for the wounded Romanian soldiers. In this manner they gathered money, but also books and brochures that they then sent to Vienna, Budapest, Cluj or Blaj⁴⁷.

Great crises reveal characters. Some fight heroically with the simplest means they have at their disposal, while others offer their services to the occupier, becoming the latter’s instrument in exploiting the local population.

Although in the Romanian provinces we encounter the whole range of attitudes specific to belligerence, World War I caused large waves of solidarity amongst the population, a first step towards women’s emancipation, but especially the birth of civil spirit in the Romanian area.

Notwithstanding the fact that most of the Romanians lived on the edge of the impossible, they did not accept defeat, faced the daily challenges and offered us a history lesson in which courage and perseverance can lead to the fulfilment of the most beautiful aspirations and ideals.

46. Bârlea, *Perspectiva lumii rurale*, 109.

47. *Unirea*, 26, No. 6, 22 Jan. 1916.

SENDING GREETINGS DURING THE GREAT WAR



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Abstract

In the last decades historians have increasingly turned their attention to the postcards, as primary sources of historical investigations. They became attractive to researchers for many reasons, one of them being the content of the small pieces of correspondence. The present article started as a curiosity of the authors, materialized in a series of questions: are the postcards reflecting the war? Are the people writing about the war in the postcards? What are the people writing on the postcards? Who is writing the postcards and to whom are they addressed? These questions constituted the starting point of the present research which investigates the war seen through the eyes and through the short messages of the “small” participants of the Great War – the ordinary people.

For the purposes of the present research, the authors took into consideration a limited number and type of postcards: 50 postcards circulated in Austria-Hungary during the years 1914–1918, and written by anonymous senders in Romanian, Hungarian, Slovak and Czech languages.

Keywords

World War I, postcards, Austria-Hungary, everyday life, Romanian, Hungarian, Slovak and Czech languages

OVER THE past few decades, scholars who have approached the Great War from a cultural perspective have often focused on minor sources, produced by ordinary individuals, who were either direct or indirect participants in the war. Such sources include correspondence, memoirs and diaries, but also postcards, vast amounts of which circulated during that period. This was, in fact, the heyday of postal correspondence, which had embarked on an upward trend in the previous decades, and during the war. The dimension of the phenomenon was so considerable, that in the view of Paul Vincent “the 1914–1918 war was won in two ways: with rifles and postcards”.¹ However farfetched this remark may seem at a first sight, it is actually not. Looking at the number of postcards alone, the data is overwhelming. Before WWI, 800 million were published yearly in France, and more than one billion in Germany, which made this country world leader in this respect. During the war this number increased to 6-7 billion, and not much less in France too.² The French never wrote as much as during the Great War. One letter a day was customary, but two or more letter exchanges a day were also not a rarity. The custom or even mania of writing was equally characteristic of soldiers, officers and civilians.³

The postcards, unlike the letters, which are more elaborate and of greater length, were quite popular at that time because they could convey brief, everyday news, of lesser importance, in a simple format that was both convenient and affordable. Although the idea of the postcard grew out of the need for a small card to carry short messages that needed no envelope so it was cheaper than a regular letter,⁴ the soldiers writing home from the frontline understandably did not comply with this criterion. Their purpose was to give as much information as possible about themselves in just a small space, and formulate their questions and requests for their loved ones at home. One may often find thus that the writers wrote not only on the back of the postcard, on the place beside the address, but also above the address, or even on the front of the postcard, on the image itself.

Postcards also had the advantage that in addition to the space allotted to the written text, they featured, on the obverse side of the postal document, an image representing a landscape, urban scenery, a monument, the reproduction of a work of art, or the portrait of a personality. This image served as a kind of souvenir that the sender bestowed upon the recipient and that supplemented the message itself of the postcard.

Over the past few decades, researchers have exhibited a considerable interest in postcards, especially insofar as the publication of collections or of albums refer-

1. Paul Vincent, *Cartes postales d'un soldat de 14 – 18* (Paris: Editions Jean-Paul Gisserot, 1988), 7.
2. <http://www.caricaturesetcaricature.com/article-les-cartes-postales-satiriques-pendantla-premiere-guerre-mondiale-96090355.html>, accessed on 06.10.2015.
3. *Courrier militaire 1914-1918*, <http://grande-guerre.org/?p=336>, accessed on 06.10.2015.
4. Roland Racine, *L'histoire de la carte postale*, <http://apr-philatelie.pagesperso-orange.fr/Pages/Articles/Expo%20Histoire%20CP.pdf>, accessed on 06.10.2015.

ring to a particular locality or region are concerned. So far, it is mostly richly illustrated albums, collections of postcards belonging to certain collectors and collections dedicated to a locality or region that have seen the light of publication.⁵ However, postcards have been extremely rarely placed in relation with real historical events and, in this case, with the Great War.⁶ Theoretical research focused on postcards is all the rarer on that account.⁷

Today, postcards are found in the collections of libraries and archives, either as individual funds or as part of personal funds, but most of them belong to private collectors. These collectors and a small number of researchers (most of whom are collectors themselves) are interested in postcards for several reasons, but above

5. See examples from Transylvania: *Grusse Aus Dem Bärenland. Siebenbürgen in alten Ansichtskarten*. Ausgewählt, eingeleitet und erläutert von Konrad Klein (München: Verlag Südostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 1998), 143 p.; *Torda és környéke régi képeslapokon*. Lászlóffy Aladár előszavával; a gyűjtő, Füsy Gyula vallomásával. (Marosvásárhely: Mentor, 2001), 80 p.; Fodor András, *Kolozsvári képeskönyv* (Kolozsvár: Gloria Kiadó – Erdélyi Híradó, 2002), 229 p.; Gheorghe Fleșer, *Alba Iulia - Orașul și monumentele sale în imagini de epocă* (Alba Iulia: Ed. Altip, 2009), 158 p.; Diana Iegar, Tamás Sárándi, *Satu Mare - amprentele trecutului. Sătmárnémeti - a múlt lenyomatai. Satu Mare - traces of the past*. Ed. Szócs Péter Levente (Satu Mare:Editura Muzeului Sătmărean,2009), 152 p.; András Csepreghy, Henrik Csepreghy, *Képeslapon üzen a múlt (miről írtak elődeink a régi marosvásárhelyi képeslapokon?)* (Marosvásárhely: Mentor, 2010), 76 p.; Cristian Florin Bota, *Odinioară în Vințu de Jos*. Ediția a II-a (Alba Iulia: Ed. Altip, 2012), 309 p. or from Slovakia: Ján Hanušin, *Trenčín na starých pohľadniciach* (Bratislava: Dajama, 2005), 96 p.; Ivan Bohuš ml., *Vysoké Tatry na starých pohľadniciach* (Bratislava: Dajama, 2007), 96 p.; Milan Kazimír, Daniela Zacharová, *Trnava na starých pohľadniciach* (Bratislava: Dajama, 2007), 96 p.; Ján Lacika, *Bratislava na starých pohľadniciach* (Bratislava: Dajama, 2008), 128 p.; J. Lacika and Daniel Kollár, *Trenčianske Teplice na starých pohľadniciach* (Bratislava: Dajama, 2010), 95 p.
6. Christine Brocks, *Die bunte Welt des Krieges. Bildpostkarten aus dem Ersten Weltkrieg 1914-1918* (Essen: Klartext, 2008), 294 p.; *Postcards from the trenches. Images from the First World War*. Introduction by Andrew Roberts (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2008), 111 p.; Jon D. Carlson, "Postcards and Propaganda: Cartographic Postcards as Soft News Images of the Russo-Japanese War" *Political Communication*, 26, 2 (April-June 2009): 212-237; "World War I postcards online" *College & Research Libraries News*, 70, 11, (December 2009): 629; Nigel Sadler, *First World War: the postcard collection* (Stroud: Amberley, 2014), 96 p.; Majoros István, „Képeslapok a frontról”, in *Sorsok, frontok, eszmék. Tanulmányok az első világháború 100. évfordulójára*, Majoros István, Antal Gábor, Hevő Péter, Madarász Anita (eds.) (Budapest: ELTE BTK, 2015), 769-778.
7. Catherine Preston, Anton Rosenthal, "Correo mitico: The construction of a civic image in the postcards of Montevideo, Uruguay, 1900-1930", *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, 15 (1996): 29 p.; Radu Mârza, „Cărțile poștale ca sursă istorică”, in *Studii de istoria artei. Volum omagial dedicat Profesorului Nicolae Sabău*. Ed. Vlad Țoca, Bogdan Iacob, Kovács Zsolt and Weisz Attila (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Argonaut, 2013): 335-354; *A Look at History through Postcards*, http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/news/2008/2008_may_06, accessed in September 2015. The propagandist role of the postcards is revealed by Petercsák Tivadar, "Történelem, politikai propaganda, helyi események a képes levelezőlapokon", in *A Hermann Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve 27. Tanulmányok a 70 esztendő Végvári Lajos tiszteletére*, Szabadfalvi József, Viga Gyula (eds.) (Miskolc: Miskolci Hermann Ottó Múzeum, 1989), 297-320.

all, for their illustrations. Moreover, these are postal documents that circulated as mail and various stamps and seals of the postal services are applied on them. Not least, postcards are interesting on account of the fragments of correspondence that these ostensibly ordinary pieces of paper or cardboard contain.

These fragments of correspondence have steered us to the subject of this research, which starts from the question: what did ordinary people write to one another on postcards at the time of World War I? Of course, a researcher of private life during World War I might be tempted to look for references to the war in these postcards. However, as it will become apparent in our research, this type of references was made very rarely in the postcards of this period, so we may ask other questions about these postcards: is there *indirect* information about the war contained in these postcards? What did people write in their postcards that was not (did not seem to be) related to the war? Lastly: Who wrote these postcards?

We shall start from the assumption that notwithstanding the fact that these postcards were the direct consequence of the presence of various individuals in military units and garrisons or on the frontline, life followed its natural course, both in the countries that were involved in conflict and in those that had maintained their neutrality. Thus, the world continued to write and receive postcards, just like in times of peace. Still, the war represented an everyday presence for the people, as may be seen below.

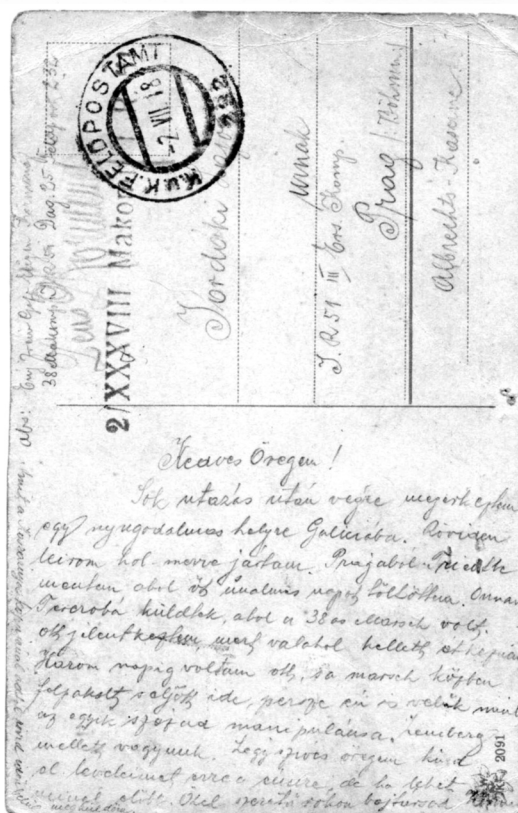
We shall attempt to answer these questions and hypotheses in what follows. Because of the fact that postcards form a huge documentary material that would require years of processing and analysis, we have selected a number of 50 postcards⁸ that circulated in the period 1914–1918 in Austria-Hungary and on the territories that came under Austro-Hungarian rule during the war. We have selected postcards written in Hungarian, Czech, Romanian, and Slovak. These postal objects belonged to anonymous individuals and it was not our intention to identify their senders or their recipients. We believe that the topics about which people wrote during this period were relevant. Still, at a first glance, we can say that the senders and the recipients included soldiers, students, peasants, craftsmen and workers, teachers etc. The senders wrote to their fathers, brothers, other relatives, or to their friends. There is one exception: we have identified Lajos Jordáky, one important typographer of the early 20th century in Cluj, who received a nice postcard from Karlovy Vary in 1918 (no. 47) from his comrade.

There is a category of photographs and postcards that circulated as items of correspondence during the war and that depict propaganda posters, combat scenes or battle fields, their connection to the Great War being easily recognizable. However, this research focuses exclusively on normal postcards, which circulated amongst civilians and military and were (seemingly) unrelated to the war.

8. These are postcards from the Radu Mârza Collection.



Postcard no. 47



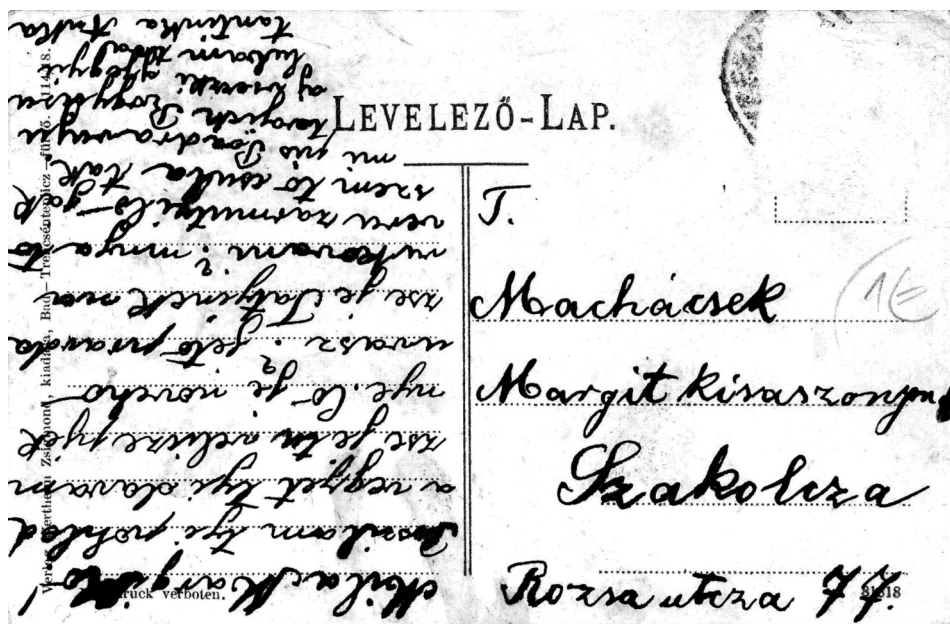
We have not undertaken a thematic selection of the postcards, because the primary criterion under consideration concerned their origin and their circulation in Austria-Hungary in the period 1914-1918. As may be seen below, most of the postcards that can be clearly ascribed to certain persons who were at home, who were travelling at the time or even to military may actually be attributed to individuals who were away from home (on various journeys, at their studies, or in the army) and who wrote to their families or friends back home. There can be many explanations in this regard, but the most plausible is that the postcards that have survived to this day are especially the postcards that reached *home* rather than those sent from home to people who were *away*, having possibly been conscribed in military units or even on the front.

The process of reading some of the postcards was often hindered by their preservation condition or by some of the senders' barely legible handwriting. And since we have touched upon this aspect, it should be noted that some of the senders were not terribly proficient at writing (but they did write, regardless!). Sometimes, besides the fact that the spelling is scarcely decipherable, the postcard may be very deteriorated and it is quite impossible to understand the meaning of certain sentences.

One of the consequences of the political realities that prevailed in Hungary up until 1918 was that some senders wrote the texts of their postcards in their native languages (for instance, Romanian or Slovak), but the name, the recipient's title and the mailing address were written in Hungarian. In the case of a postcard (no. 23), we found that the sender had written it in Slovak but with a strongly Magyarized script. Many of the messages sent on postcards were written in an archaic form of the language (Romanian, Slovak, Czech, and Hungarian).

This study is not intended as a critical edition of the postcards under analysis. As authors, our main intention is to signal the importance of this type of historical source for cultural research on the Great War. Thus, we have compiled a list of the postcards we have investigated and will present it at the end of this study, including the place of dispatch (the precise location), the date and, possibly, the sender and the recipient. Given the diversity of names these places may have been given from 1914-1918 until today, we shall use, in the text, the present-day name of the locality, specifying also the name that was written on the postcards.

Among the senders there were many soldiers, who are easily identifiable not so much through the specific topics of war they addressed (these subjects were, in fact, only exceptionally and tangentially approached, because of the censorship!), but with the help of the seals or addresses of the military units in which these soldiers served. Other seals are indicating the passing of the postcards through the censure. For instance, we have come across seals with the inscriptions *Landsturm-Infanteriebrigade Oberst Dominic* from Višegrad (Bosnia), *Seeminen Komando* from



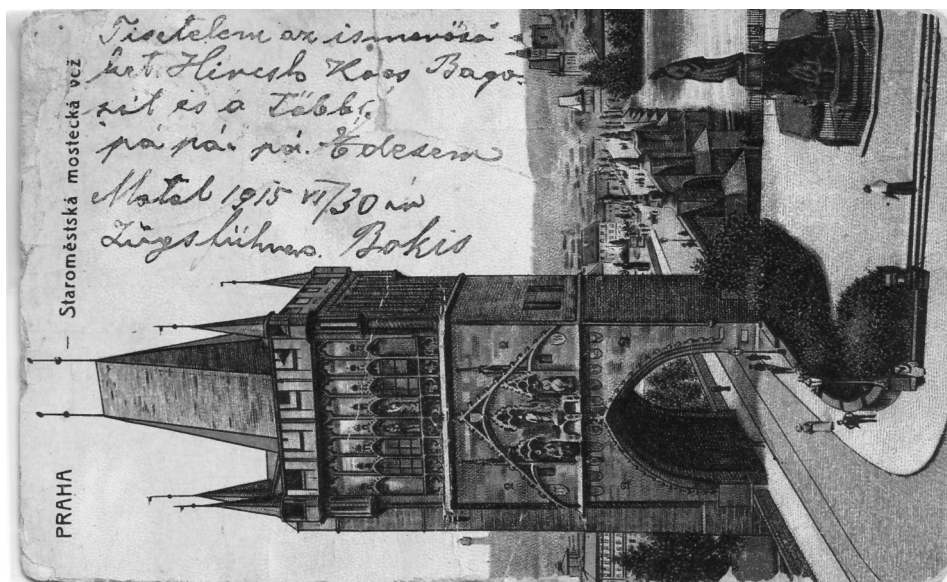
Postcard no. 23

Pola, *Kanonen Batterie 3* from Hradec Králové, *KuK Technischefasungstelle, Elektrowerkstätte* from Ljubljana, *KK Stationskomando* from Bucharest, *KK Ersatzkompanie* from Sopron, an illegible seal impression, probably belonging to a marine unit stationed in Kotor, *KK Trans(mission) Div(ision) N. 2* from Novi Sad, *Vereinsreservespital "Leoninum" in Laibach*. *Militärpflege* from Ljubljana, *Vöröskeresztkórház* from Trenčianske Teplice, *K.u.K. Militärzensur Lemberg* from Lvov, *K.u.K. Infanterieregiment Nr. 23. III. Feldbataillon* from the same city, *Zensuriert. K.u.K. [?] Zensur Marburg* from Maribor, *Zensur [?] 4* from Zagreb, *Zensur. Von der Armee im Felde* from an Austrian mountain location (Mittelwaldbahn) and others (postcards no. 4, 7, 10, 12, 13, 18, 19, 22, 27, 30, 33, 34, 38, 46, 48).

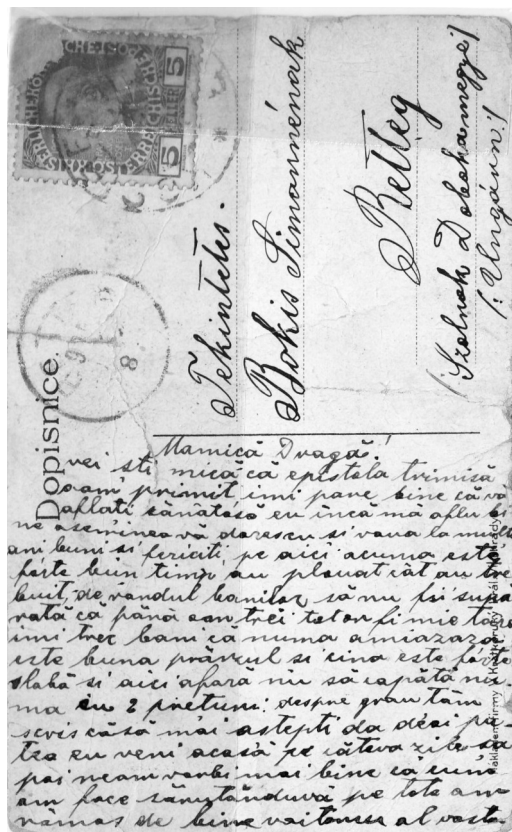
Another aspect of considerable importance was the exceptional mobility of the senders: among the authors of the postcards analysed, there were senders who originated from Bohemia but wrote postcards from Hungary and Transylvania, or senders who were stationed in Hungary, Istria, Tyrol, etc. and wrote to their families in Transylvania. This may, indeed, serve as a clue regarding the mobilization of soldiers into military units that were positioned or fought at the opposite end of the Monarchy.

In reading and analysing these postcards, we have detected several topics that were preferred by the senders. One such topic was voyage, travelling to a different place; in some cases, even in the absence of other clues, the sender was quite probably a military man. Sometimes the senders are transmitting various sentiments: loneliness, sadness, or they are missing the home. For instance, a soldier stationed in Transylvania wrote to his family in Prague (no. 5) that he hoped he would be able to come home in a few days. In February 1916, a soldier who was a native of the area around Prague wrote from Szeged to his family about being moved into a military unit (*Marschkompanie*) that was leaving for Deszk/Desk (no. 9). A sender of Czech origin, a soldier, perhaps, or a civilian employee, wrote from Ljubljana/Laibach to his brother, who also served in another military unit (no. 12). In January 1918, a soldier originating from Moravia wrote from Cluj/Kolozsvár to his mother that they had arrived in the city after two sleepless nights and that they would spend a day of rest there (no. 13). In 1915, a sender of Czech origin wrote from Băile Herculane/Herkulesfürdő/Herkulesbad to his family that he had arrived there two days before (no. 16). In October 1917, a Romanian sender from Lancrăm (Transylvania) wrote to a friend from Orăștie/Szászváros (Transylvania) a postcard (representing an image of Budapest), saying that he had arrived home three days before for a 14-day leave and asking him to pay him a visit (no. 24). In the summer of 1918, a Czech soldier from Moravia wrote from Trento to his family that he was on his way home and that he was going to take the train to Vienna (no. 6).

Kristóf P. only wrote his address and a postscript-like message in 1916 to Mariska Merza, gentle young girl from Gherla/Szamosújvár (Transylvania), in black ink, on the front of a postcard depicting Jindřichův Hradec/Neuhaus (Bohemia), in



Postcard no. 5

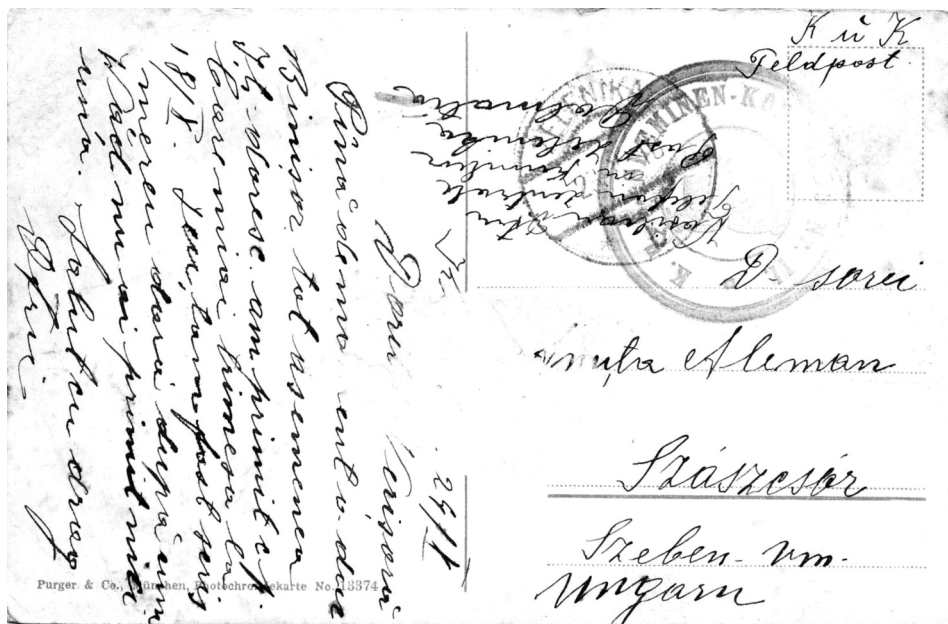


which he sent his regards to the girls he was acquainted with (no. 42). Sándor Zakariás, however, sent a postcard depicting the town hall of Celje (nowadays Slovenia) filled with writing both on the back and the front to his wife to Aiud/Nagyenyed (Transylvania) (no. 38). The difference in this case is perhaps that while the form of address on the back of the card is “Dear wife and my dear parents”, on the front he only addressed his wife “Dear wife”. The information he shared also suggests that the part on the back concerned both his wife and parents, as general questions referring to the whole family (he received their previous letter, he is glad everybody is healthy, just as he is, and he asks them to write about the events at home). The text on the front page is somewhat more personal, as it refers to the wife’s workplace. When saying good-bye, he returns again to the common addressing of wife and parents and the frequent prayer: “[...] so don’t be sad because, if the good God may help us, the relief will come but not only to me but to everyone who deserves to live.”⁹ We are lucky to have one more postcard of Sándor Zakariás preserved (no. 39). The accurate dating compared to the other authors is conspicuous: Maribor/Marburg, 14 November 1915, 4 o’clock in the afternoon (no. 38) and 11 January 1917, 11 o’clock in the morning (no. 39). The person writing to the young Mrs János Németh, possibly the husband, János Németh himself, sent to Jászkisér in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County dated his card even more accurately. His nostalgia for the warmth of the home made him date his card not only with place, date and hour (Zagreb, 4 December 1915, 11 in the morning), but also the day of his enrolment (80th day) (no. 46.)

Two other postcards were addressed to Mrs Béla Papp of Cluj/Kolozsvár, sent by a person signing himself as “Daddy” (no. 40, 41). The text interpretation proves that the author is probably Béla Papp, writing to his family. On the postcards dated 1916 and 1917, he addresses his wife in a warm and gentle tone („Aranyos világom, Aranyos” – sweet names to call his wife). In content, it is a postcard of the situation report-kind, in which the authors give a fairly accurate account of their whereabouts, their future route, and possibly also which way they arrived. On 14 of May 1916, Béla Papp sends his kisses to his wife at 9 o’clock in the morning from Kovel/Kowel, “Russian land” (nowadays Ukraine), reporting that his road to Kowel was fortunate, he spent the night there, and continues his way to Wolczek (?) that same morning. No wonder then, that the postcard represents the Post-Telegraph Station of Kovel/Kowel (no. 40). The postcard dated 29 August 1917 has a similar content, with a slightly more general formulation: “We move on in a short half an hour. I’ve already recovered from the long road’s fatigue. The nicest part of the road starts just now (no. 41).¹⁰ Elek’s localization

9. „[...] azért ne busuja-/tok mert ha a jó Isten meg segít talán már valamikor végleg el/ jön a fölmentés de nem csak/ nekem hanem mindenkinek/ a ki csak érdemes lesz megma-/radni.”

10. “Rövid / félóra múlva indulunk to-/vább. A hosszú út fá-/radalmaít kipihentem,/ már. Az útnak most/ kezdődik csak a szeb-/bik fele.”



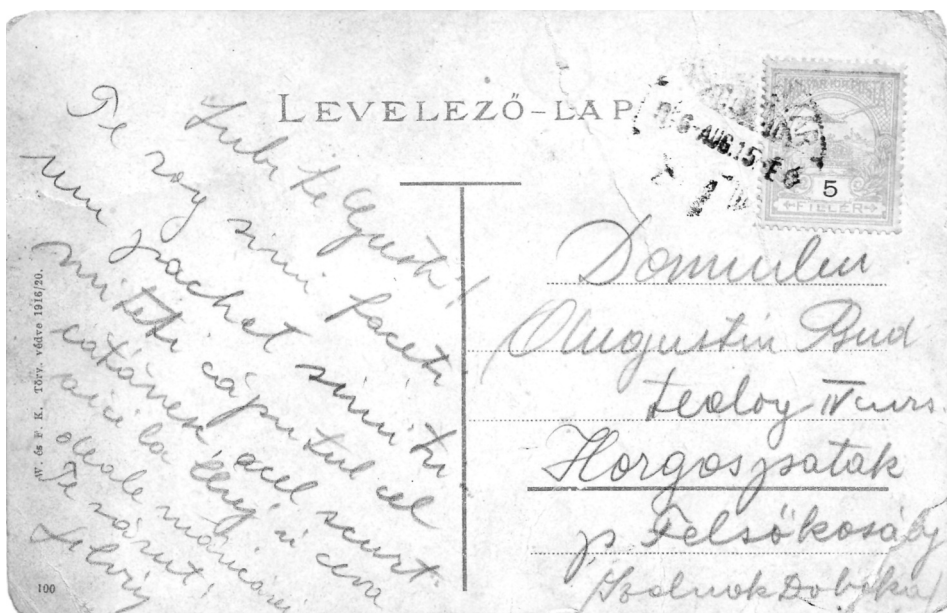
method is quite special (and fortunate): he managed to find a postcard which perfectly coincides with his geographical position. The postcard addressed to Lenke Teleki from Târgu Mureş/Marosvásárhely shows the railway bridge over the Inn river (no. 48), that “we have just crossed a moment ago” [“épen az előbb mentünk keresztül”], and the information that they are getting close to their target. The unknown soldier who sent his postcard from Karlovy Vary/Karlsbad to his comrade in Prague, Lajos Jordáky, also gives a details account of his previous journey (no. 47). This is a special case because in the majority of the postcards we examined the addressees are usually close family members, and very rarely battle comrades. The “My dear old fellow” serving in *Ersatz-Bataillon Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 51* and stationed in *Albrechts Kaserne* in Prague is Lajos Jordáky, one of the most important typographers of the early 20th century in Cluj, and an outstanding organizer and leader of the labour movement in the city at the turn of the century. His friend, as the paymaster of the company, describes in detail his journey from Prague to Lviv/Lemberg, how much time he spent everywhere.

A clear indication of participation in the war, even in the units that were behind the front, was information relating to the soldiers’ stay in hospitals. Sometimes they are inducing a certain state of mind. Their emotional charge is still perceivable today on the largest scale: sadness, worries, disappointment, and hope. P. wrote from Ljubljana to Mrs Géza Váradi in Debrecen (no. 27.). P., who got into hospital again, is now suffering from gastritis and anaemia. He complains about the conditions of the operation. There, the operation was decided to be necessary, but P. wanted to be operated on in Budapest. His request was rejected because they said he could not be transported. Although his symptoms did not cease and he admitted to be “very weak”, the operation was no longer considered urgent. He still faintly hopes he would be sent home, but rumour says that no one is sent home in such a state. József Darvas in 1915 also wants to go home. The soldier writing to his parents in Cetățuia/Csatószege (Transylvania) from garrison hospital 16 in Budapest asks them to acquire, as soon as possible, a sealed certificate in Hungarian from the hospital in Miercurea Ciuc/Csíkszereda, written in “nice readable writing”, that they have spare beds and can tend to him, and send it to him “ecprecsly” [as express]. (no. 28). Dezső addresses also from a hospital in Budapest his little more happier and hopeful letter to his love, Magduska Csiki in Târgu Mureş/Marosvásárhely. He considers important his feelings to be returned and enforced during his illness (“You do love me, don’t you? Jóska doesn’t matter anymore!”)¹¹ He has great plans for the time after his recovery, which he reckons would last for two months: he wants to cross “this” nice lake by boat (he means the lake in the Városliget in Budapest, displayed on the postcard). He also promises to send to Magdi “the other parts of this damned big city”¹² on postcards. An interesting case is that of Kemény from Turda/Torda

11. „Ugye hogy engem szeretsz? Jóska az már nem számít!”

12. “[...] a többi részit is ennek a nagy fene városnak.”

Postcard no. 11



(Transylvania). He wrote two short postcards from the isolation hospital in Prague on 20 September 1915. The first is sent to his mother in Turda, informing her that he is still alive, and in hospital in Prague (no. 36.) The other is addressed to his son, and there he already says that they should pray for him (no. 37). The parental instinct, however, works even under such circumstances, for he still suggests to him to behave well, because “if daddy goes home, he will bring him a sword.”¹³ What else could “disarm” a little boy if not a sword?! The officer named Kiss recovering in the Red Cross Hospital in Trenčianske Teplice/Trencséntéplitz (nowadays Slovakia) in March 1917 reports to his friend, lieutenant Szeghalmy V. from Szolnok that “the doctor has taken away the stick, and so he is walking without it”,¹⁴ and because the weather is starting to warm up, too, he can enjoy the beauty of the mountains from closer (no. 30). He wrote his message on a postcard displaying the imposing building of the Healing Centre from the turn of the century in Trencséntépliz. Rezső writes to his brother in Budapest also from Trencséntépliz (no. 31). The formulation suggests that this case is less about a patient than somebody who works there (“Yesterday I took care of S.’s case, he’s being relocated today to Res. Hospital.”¹⁵ He stresses that “the weather is (1915, middle of October) pretty good, the company as well”¹⁶ and that he is going on a trip to the surrounding area in the afternoon. He is waiting at the same time for the package from home (shoes, food). Mrs János Németh Junior is most likely informed by her husband in 1915 that the medical examination was done in the morning and that they are leaving to another hospital in Zagreb that same afternoon (no. 46). He will write his new address later. He mentions their common acquaintances, “Mr Őrnagy and his family” as well, who are leaving to another hospital too, but to a different one. The reason why this postcard is unique is that the writer wrote below the two stamps as well. The recipient must have known this, because they removed them carefully, and the information emerged. There was nothing special hidden in the text, he only assured the recipients about his feelings. If he seems to have addressed the text on the postcard displaying Zagreb – the Jelačić square („Jelačićev”) – to his wife, the addressee of the two little texts written in squares (small stamp sized) below the stamps seems to be his son. Below the first stamp: “God, I would like to see you so much So I write Your daddy kisses you”, below the second stamp: “I would like to be with you my sweet happiness write if you must right now kisses from your dad”.¹⁷ A soldier of Romanian origin had been admitted into a military hospital in Brno/Brünn, from where he wrote to his family (no. 1); another wrote that he would stay in the barracks (in Hradec Králové in Bohemia) because of his toothache (no. 10), while another wrote that he was in a

13. “[...] ha édes apuka haza megy visz neki kardot.”

14. “[...] a botot elvette az orvos, s így bot nélkül jár.”

15. “[...] Tegnap eljártam S. ügyében, ma helyezik át a Res. Spitalba.”

16. “[...] az időjárás (1915. október közepe) elég jó, ugyszintén a társaság is.”

17. „[...] de szeretnék/-lek már/Istenem lát-/ni beneteket/irok azanel / csokol apukad”; „[...] de szeretnék/ már veled leni/ édes boldogságom/írájál ha kell/azonal csak/apudtól.”



Boje, Drahe
Pročice
 Nejezdice kárm. ročníkán mély
 Sulem, poudav, se pán hřístou
 Spomínkou, a stysicoma Lollykrom
 X to křem. ne spolek. a křelaji
 Kám rovine pújele 25. na
 Myslo. a. Koi kám a púlin
 Ká svet. Kterýzamo jesto ne
 Křidel: a pouljein kám napírán
 Jak to ve vae v pádu. a pial
 B. ro kám rade by krasne kope
 Já ne pohlednout: Koi kám goi
 Do nje: a to alych si bítam
 Lelch. tak kř: Křetky aduipm.
 A Liban a to adale ho cischi
 Kř. Lin. papi. Ká hovec. Böhmen
 Kř. púle mi bray. a Böhmen

LEVELEZŐ-LAP.

M. G.
 O.

Karl Karoni
Pan.

HERKULESFÜRDŐ
 15. OKT. 20
 1€

Frankl. Ká hovec:
kolník, ve Stralach. K. 21:
p. p. Chruic. a Strakonice
Böhmen.

73062

military hospital at Novi Sad/Újvidék (in Vojvodina, Serbia), but that he was feeling better (no. 22).

A subject that was frequently addressed in correspondence was ... correspondence itself. The senders often wrote about the postcards and the letters they had previously sent to or received from their families and friends. Sometimes they expressed their discontent that they had received no reply to their letters or to the concrete questions they had asked, or told other relatives and friends that they had not received answers to their letters (no. 2, 7). An anonymous sender, originally from Moravia, a soldier serving in a military unit of the Navy from Kotor/Cattaro (in nowadays Montenegro), requested his brother to send his best wishes to everyone and to ask their brother Anton to write to him (no. 19). A sender of Slovak origin wrote from Subotica/Szabadka (in Vojvodina, Serbia) to his relatives in Myjava (Slovakia) (October 1918) that he had received a postcard from Draňuš, who, as far as we have understood, was ill, because "at least, he eats something." The same sender asked whether Zuzana (?) had been at home (no. 20). A sender who was a native of Bohemia ("dad") wrote to his wife and his son Ládiček in Szeged (December 1915), saying he had received the two letters, which he had picked up from the post office and for which he had paid 20 Hellers, and asking whether they had received his three letters. He also inquired if his son still had toothaches (no. 21). A sender numbered his letters (the messages on his postcards), the one written in February 1916 being his eighth such letter (no. 9).

Sometimes news about various relatives or acquaintances was commented on. A Czech soldier wrote to his parents in Szeged (in February 1916) that he had received tidings (also in a postcard!) from his brother (?) Bohumil and transmitted some news about him to their parents (no. 9) (see also below). Anka wrote from Trenčianske Teplice/Trencsénteplicz (Slovakia), from the baths perhaps, to Margit, his sister (?) from Skalica/Szakolcza (in nowadays Slovakia too), asking her whether it was true that their father had been taken into the army and expressed her sadness on this account (no. 23). She had probably learned this news from another member of the family, also by way of correspondence. The postcard cannot be dated with precision, because the stamp bearing the postmark was torn off.

From some of the postcards we may find out that some senders encountered, while they were away, acquaintances or close relatives. A Romanian sender wrote from Budapest to Ocna Mureș/Marosújvár (Transylvania) that he had met Niculae, who had visited him, but that Grămadă (?) had also been there without paying him any visit (no. 2). Ioniță wrote from Budapest (in November 1916) to a recipient from Sătmar/Szatmár County about another Ioniță, who was to visit him, and about Iuliu, with whom he had spent several pleasant afternoons (no. 14).

Sometimes postcards were written in haste, in the street, with the promise of writing detailed letters as soon as possible; such was the case, for example, of a Romanian soldier from Sătmar/Szatmár County who wrote a postcard in Budapest in November

Postcard no. 38



1916 (no. 14). Another sender, of Czech origin, a soldier, most likely, wrote to his family as soon as he had reached Băile Herculane/Herkulesfürdő/Herkulesbad in October 1915, saying that he was very impressed with the places he had arrived in and promising that he would write soon, with more details (no. 16).

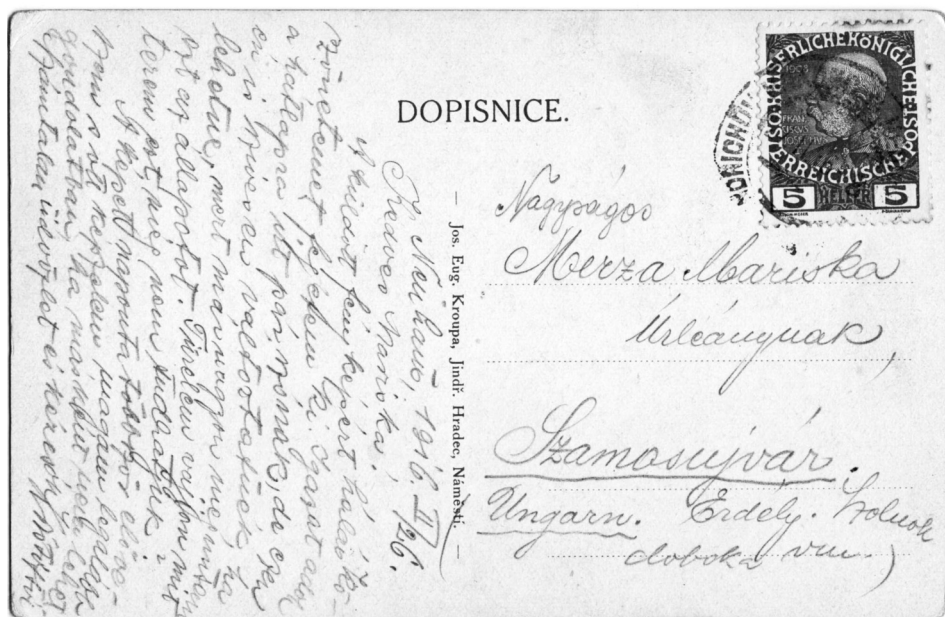
In general, at the end of their messages on postcards, the senders gave their best wishes to their entire families, but they sometimes also greeted their other relatives, acquaintances and neighbours, attempting to send them, brief messages of 3-4 words, despite the small size of the postcards (no. 9). Numerous authors sent their thoughts to their children, asking how they were doing (see above, no. 21). A group of individuals from Prague (Holešov) sent their best wishes from Maramureş/Máramaros to a young lady in Prague, saying that they were enjoying a good beer (June 1915) (no. 15).

All these snippets of correspondence make it clear that people at that time communicated very frequently (considering the means and possibilities back then) and we may glean from these postcards how important this form of communication was for them. We may also ascertain a certain absence of the formalism encountered in many of the postcards written over the past few decades or nowadays; during that period, people communicated at a much more concrete level through postcards. In fact, by reading them, we may come across numerous references to their personal life.

Aside from the information presented above in relation to the soldiers' stay in various hospitals (no. 1, 10, 22), there is also other information related to the senders' own health or to that of their families, an aspect that was of the highest interest to the senders of the postcards analysed. We mentioned above the postcard sent by the Czech soldier who wrote from Szeged to his parents (in February 1916) about the news he had received from his brother (?) Bohumil, who suffered from inflammation of the middle ear, saying that he could be sent back from the front and resume his civilian life (no. 9).

But disease affected not only those in the war, but those who stayed at home, too. Those being at the front sometimes took hard the physical deterioration of those living under much better circumstances at home, because they now had to worry about those at home as well besides their own condition. However, this burden almost appears as an insult in Marci's case, for "those at home dared to get sick" („meg mertek betegedni"). Or so suggests his text written on the postcard displaying the Haliczki Platz of Lviv/Lemberg in January 1916: "Interesting, all of you are sick at home, in the warm room, I'm sitting out here on horseback in ice, snow, windstorm, rain etc. and don't get cold, I go through water, mud, I don't get sick. Why don't you take care of yourselves?" (no. 34).¹⁸ Maybe he tried to

18. „[...] Érdekes, ti otthon mindnyájan betegek vagytok, a jó meleg szobában, én itt kint lóháton ülök jégben, hóban, szélviharban, esőben stb. és nem fázom meg, megyek vízben, sárban, nem leszek beteg. Mért nem vigyáztok magatokra?"



Postcard no. 43

get the edge off of this slightly angry message with his short, playful message written the next day (“Manykisses Marci”) (no. 35). The infatuated anonymous soldier’s attitude towards his lover’s sickness is completely different in his message. He worriedly expresses his hope that “his little Rabbit has already consumed a few bottles of fine (?) cod-liver oil,” and that she is consuming her food terribly and with insatiable appetite (no. 45).¹⁹

Sad aspects of life were also touched upon in these postcards. In 1914, an anonymous sender of Slovak origin wrote from Arad to his parents in Banská Štiavnica/Selmecbánya about the fact that at 5 o’clock on Sunday morning, Ilonka (presumably his wife) had died giving birth to a boy (no. 17). The text is very damaged and, therefore, barely legible, but it may also be inferred that the sender intended to enlist in the army.

Other, relatively scarce information concerns the places the sender was in or the image shown on the postcard. A lady (possibly young) wrote to a friend (?) in French from Veszprém (Hungary), in August 1917, confessing that she was writing from a nice park, where there were a lot of fir trees and other nice trees. On Monday she would be returning to Budapest (no. 3). A Czech soldier from Moravia wrote from Trento about how beautiful Italy was (no. 6). A female sender (Silvana?) sent her greetings from Bratislava to a cousin, saying that it was a beautiful city and that it “has very many important historical landmarks” (June 1915) (no. 8). She also informed her addressee that she would go on a two-hour voyage on the Danube, in Vienna. A Romanian sender, Silviu, most likely a soldier, wrote from Cluj/Kolozsvár to Gusti (Augustin), a student in theology, sending him a postcard that represented the wooden statue of the Carpathians’ guardsman (erected in 1914–1915, removed after 1918)²⁰ and saying that it was a very beautiful statue, reminiscent of a frozen military position in the Carpathians (August 1916) (no. 11). Not least, mention should be made of an already cited postcard, sent by a Czech soldier from Băile Herculane/Herkulesfürdő/Herkulesbad to his parents, in which he told them that... “I am looking around and wondering about the world I never knew until now [...] There are nice hills here, they deserve being admired” (October 1915) (no. 16). The author of the postcard sent from Trenčianske Teplice/Trencsénteplicz said that she was in a very nice place (see above, no. 23). The comment is fully justified, like in the case of the postcard sent from Băile

19. „[...] kis Nyuszi-/kája elfogyasztott már pár üveg fájín (?) csuka-/májolajat, s pusztítja-e szörnyű módon s kielégíthetetlen ét-/vággyal az ételeket”.

20. The statue placed on the south-east corner of the Main Square (today Piața Unirii) was one of the usual fundraising war memories realized by Ferenc Kolozsvári-Szeszák in 1915. Destroyed in April 1919, pieces of the statue were still preserved for a while in the Museum of History. Murádin Jenő, *A megsebzett szobor. Elpusztult vagy megsérült erdélyi magyar emlékművek repertóriuma* (Kolozsvár: Kriterion Könyvkiadó, 2008), 52; http://nemzetikonyvtar.blog.hu/2015/08/18/a_karpatok_ore and https://www.kozterkep.hu/~12400/Karpatok_ore_Kolozsvar_1915.html, accessed in November 2015.

Herculane, for both towns were (at that time, as they are now) famous balneary resorts. On a postcard showing a nice railway bridge over the Inn river it can be read that “we have just crossed a moment ago” and that “the country around is beautiful” (no. 48).

Several postcards refer to the weather. A Romanian soldier located in Prague (June 1915) wrote to his mother in a Transylvanian village that “the weather is good and it rained just enough” (no. 5). Another soldier, originally from Moravia, wrote to his mother in January 1918 from Cluj/Kolozsvár that the winter was harsh there (no. 13). Also in January (1916), a soldier, originally from Bohemia, wrote from Sopron informing his addressee that the weather there was mild (no. 18).

Many minor issues, pertaining to daily life, were addressed in the postcards. For instance, a Czech sender wrote from Ljubljana about his workplace in a “beautiful” factory, which manufactured especially copper products. He had been accepted by the owner (*Fabrikant*) and would start work the next day. He was afraid it would be a little worse than in Vienna, but he had to pull through because he had no other prospects. The sender added that he would have to make his own meals, but hoped it would not be long before he could come home (June 1917) (no. 12). Luda, a sender of Slovak origin, wrote from Subotica/Szabadka to his uncle and aunt in Myjava about the fact that he had just seen the manager (?) and received financial aid (a grant?) worth 64 crowns (October 1918) (no. 20). Of the 100 crowns, Luda had been left with 9. He had spent the rest of the money on tomatoes and notebooks. At the end of the letter, he even asked his aunt and uncle whether the tomatoes had arrived. Perhaps he had mailed them a package of tomatoes... The school holidays had been extended until the 5th, but he had continued to study. The postcard was sent in October 1918, in a period that was certainly less than favourable for school activities... Of course, it would be interesting to find out other details about these biographical pathways that had led the senders of these postcards away from home, for reasons we are not aware of: from somewhere in Bohemia or Moravia to Ljubljana, or from the present-day territory of Slovakia to Subotica, in the province of Vojvodina, in Serbia today.

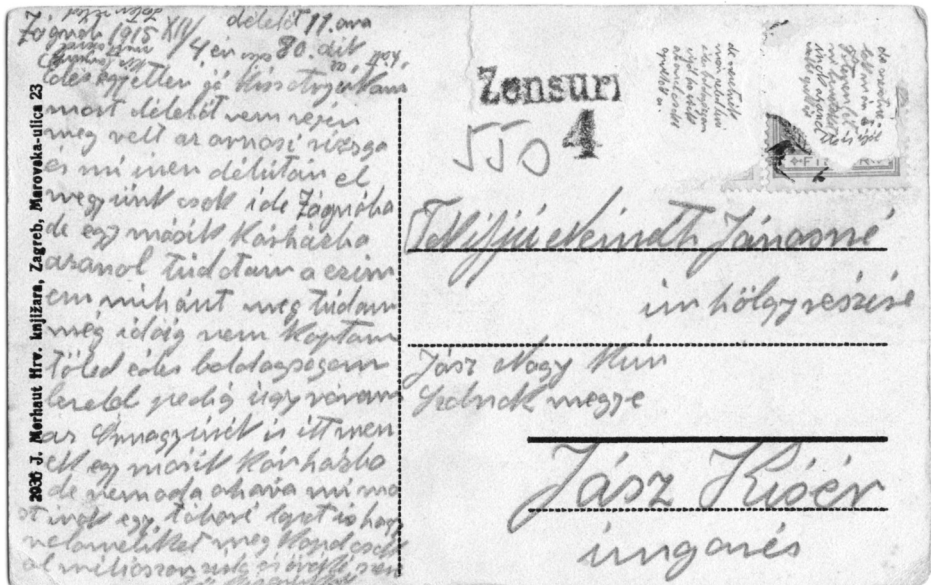
This detail draws our attention to various purchases or packages that senders send or require them by mail. A Czech sender who wrote to his family from Szeged (December 1915) conveys that he bought semolina, but he did not find only eight kilograms. These were to be sent (by mail) next day, promising that he will send more if he finds (no. 21). The Romanian sender who wrote the postcard in Budapest and addressed it to Ocna Mureş/Marosújvár (June 1915) said that he has transmitted to third parties (probably close relatives, following an earlier correspondence or conversation) that he will buy shoes to Niculaie next month, but he is not able to do it for the moment. The writer of this postcard also expressed his dissatisfaction that although he sent 10 crowns to his mother and 4 crowns to Niculaie, they (?) did not proceed according to his will (no. 2). The same money

issue is the theme of the next postcard sent by a certain Bokis soldier (Zugführer) from Prague to his mother, telling her not to worry about the money, because he does not need anymore. He also informs his mom that contrary to the dinner the lunch is good, and there is also the possibility to eat in town (?) although had to pay for it [the text is unclear, the authors' note]. At the end of his writing, the soldier advised his mother to wait with the wheat (probably he refers to the harvest or the sale of the wheat), because he will try to come home for a few days and then he will take care of it (no. 5). The soldier who signed as Silviu and writes from Cluj/Kolozsvár (in August 1916) (see above, no. 11) asked Gusti, the addressee to send in a package "my military mantle, the short one, and also send me something to eat..." The Moravian soldier who was in a military unit (probably a marine one) at Kotor/Cattaro demanded his brother to send him what he requested and put also in the package some sausages (*vuschle*) (no. 19). Similarly, the food is the main issue of the postcard wrote by another Moravian soldier stationed in Cluj/Kolozsvár, who reassured his mother that although the winter is hard, there is plenty of food. Unfortunately, the text partly is illegible, but we can also read about "a lot of paprika and a lot of beer" ("how much you want") and that he still have some jam and a piece of dumpling (*buchta*) (January 1918) (no. 13). A Czech sender who writes to his wife and his son from Szeged (in December 1915) enquired if they received the three letters sent earlier. He is also asking for his son's toothache (no. 21).

Requesting a package from home, waiting for it, its arrival are motifs occurring in other postcards as well. Gyurica thanks, with clumsy letters, his brother, Corporal István Horváth residing in Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár, for the shoes he had sent (49). Gyurica was so insecure about writing that first he drew lines on the back of the card, and only then put into words incorrectly his short message.

The cards consisting of mosaic-like reports constitute a separate group of the postcards arriving from the front. They write about all sorts of different things, but you'll notice they are trying to follow the agenda of everyday life despite the war. One of the best examples is Cs. E. (no. 26) writing home from Prague to Apahida (in Transylvania) in March, 1916. The text on the postcard displaying the Ferenc József Train Station in Prague says a lot: "We have been closed for ten days due to an occurring small pox case. Is the baby cold at night, in the morning? Do you still have wood and coal? Is everybody healthy? Plant a lot of onions, peas and beans in the garden. What's new at home? Have the two books arrived from Budapest? If not, hurry them!"²¹ Jancsi Kovács, who has just graduated from the officer's school, is concerned about the fate of his magazines (no. 50). His card

21. „[...] Több mint 10 napja be vagyunk zárva előfordult himlőeset miatt. A kis baba nem fázik-e este, reggel? Van-e fájuk és szénük még? Nem beteg-e senki? A kertbe tegyenek sok hagymát, borsót és pászulyt. Mi újság van otthon? Megjött-e Budapestről a 2 könyv. Ha nem, megsürgetni.”



Postcard no. 46

addressed to the director of the Dumbrăveni/Erzsébetváros Gymnasium from Târnava Mică/Kis-Küküllő County in Transylvania says that he does reside in Budapest now (December of 1917), but his road leads to the front from there. He asks the addressee to send his magazines to Kecskemét.

The officers' training continued even during the war, and an officer's career, although attractive earlier as well, became even more so. The training was still done in the officer's schools known all across the monarchy. P. Kristóf, likely born in Gherla/Szamosújvár (Transylvania), was such a young man, who continued his officer's studies in 1916, in Jindřichův Hradec/Neuhaus (Bohemia). He took quite hard the distance from home and especially from Mariska Merza, who was very dear to him. There are three letters from between the January and March of the same year, where he describes the city to the young lady, considering it a nest compared to Prague (no. 42). The postcard sent in February is quite special. The colourful image shows the town's main square, with young men in officer's costume marching across it in orderly lines, while civilians are watching, and with P. Kristóf's writing on it: "I'm there too, do you recognize me? [Itt vagyok én is megismer?]" The text written on the back of the card could be of interest as well, since it expresses the writer's grateful thanks to Mariska Merza for the photograph she sent. It probably didn't illustrate a person because P. Kristóf writes that "I take it out a few times/a day and I image being there at least in my thoughts, if I can't otherwise."²² Rather, it seems to be a place common for them, capturing a pleasant experience (no. 43). On his third card, also displaying Jindřichův Hradec, P. Kristóf raises a problem often affecting those at home: the desire of the person returning home on leave or in this case on break from the officer's school. P. Kristóf sees his situation quite realistically. He is aware that "If fate benefits him, he will maybe be able to spend Easter at home, but he is afraid he will be left with the hope, like at Christmas"²³

The desire for an approved leave is much stronger in the postcard we named "the postcard of the soldier in love". The feelings of the soldier heated by love come through the lines, which are emphasized at every step by the nicknames that take the shape of the possessive form (my little bunny, my little deer, my cute angel). He counts the time spent away from his lover and the remaining time with the typical despair of hot, flaming lovers, and with hope the possible meeting: "Easter is almost here in this place (crossed out) as well, we get the break on 14 (because the boys are having a st. exercise, that's why it is so early), we'll have 11 days; quite long, right? But what is it worth if we can't be/together again? I hope it passes as

22. "[...] naponta többször előve-/szem s ott képzelem magam legalább/ gondolatban, ha másként nem lehet."

23. "[...] Ha/ a sors kedvez talán sikerül a Hus-/vétot otthon töltönnie, de fél/ hogy csak a reménnyel marad,/ mint Karácsonykor."

soon/as possible!, just as six months passed today (do you remember?), thank God. Those bloody 4 months are nothing, right, my little deer? And then?... My God! just help us! Nobody will be happier than us in the world! Right, my cute Angel?”²⁴ We should offer some explanations to the anonymous “soldier in love”. The anonymous must have written two letters, because he numbered them with Roman numbers, and the one we analyze is the second one (II). Unfortunately, this does not reveal the recipient, or the sender. The picture on the postcard does not provide information either: there is a river in the foreground, and a medieval (?) castle on a tall, jutting rock in the background, with a settlement at the foot of the mountain, probably the Beckov castle on the Váh valley in nowadays Slovakia. The sender is probably a man, and according to the context (the reference to the upcoming Easter, his interest in the blooming violets), he must have written it during spring.

Finally, we should present a postcard whose text is very personal and, at the same time, spectacular. Any comments would be redundant here:

It is eight o'clock in the evening. I have come back from my walk. When I first went up the street, Mihail was at the window, the second time I went, he was strolling with Terențiu and then alone. He ambled very slowly; one can see that the poor man is still suffering. Mili, too bad you're not here to see him, he's like the sun, I'm telling you, you'd go mad about him if you just laid eyes on him. I'm not sure I've ever fancied anyone, but I do like him beyond belief. There's something ideal about him, something I cannot describe. I was walking with Silvi and I drove her nuts, so now she says that willy-nilly she has also come to like him, even though she hasn't caught a good glimpse of him. Elena is head over heels, especially since he has blue eyes (postcard sent from Lugoj/Lugos to Budapest, in September 1918; no. 25).

Despite the war, life followed its course. That is the general idea that emerges from the postcards analysed here.

*This article was translated by Carmen-Veronica Borbely (from Romanian)
and by Emese Czintos (from Hungarian).*

24. “[...] mindjárt itt lesz a husvét itt (kihúzza) is, 14-/kén kapjuk a vakációt (ugyanis sz. gyakorla-/tot tartanak előtte a fiúk, ezért adjuk ki/ oly hamar), 11 napunk lesz; jó hosszú ugy-e? De hát mit ér ez, mikor megint csak nem/ lehetünk együtt? Csak teljen el az is minél/ előbb!, mint ahogy ma már éppen hat hó-/nap eltelt (emlékszik-e rá?), hála Istennek./ Az a rongyos 4 hónap már semmi, ugye kis Őzi-/kém? s aztán? ... Istenem! csak segits meg/ bennünket! Senki boldogabb nem lesz ná-/lunk a világon! Ugye aranyos kis Angyalom?”

Appendix

List of the postcards (illustration, localisation, date, sender, and addressee)

1.
Image: Brno/Brunn, Moravia (nowadays Czech Republic), Renner Street
Date: 22 April 1915
Sender: unclear name
Addressee: sender's brother, Aurel Ozetea from Toporcsa, Hungary (today Topârcea, Sibiu county, Romania)
2.
Image: Budapest (Hungary), Disztér
Date: 16 June 1915
Sender: anonymous
Addressee: Aura Roșca, Marosújvár, Hungary (today Ocna Mureș, Alba county, Romania)
3.
Image: Veszprém (Hungary), a view of the castle
Date: 31 August 1917
Sender: Gisi Szelmager
Addressee: Vider Izsoné, Budapest, Hungary
4.
Image: Višegrad in Bosnia (nowadays Bosnia and Herzegovina)
Date: undated
Seal of the *Landsturm-Infanteriebrigade Oberst Dominic*
5.
Image: Praha/Prague (nowadays Czech Republic), the Bridge tower
Date: 30 June 1915
Sender: Bokis (*Zugführer*)
Addressee: his mother, Bokis Simonné in Reteag, Hungary (today Reteag, Bistrița-Năsăud county, Romania)
6.
Image: Trento (nowadays Italy), panorama
Date: 7 June 1918
Sender: E. Srnec
Addressee: Pospichalová family in Julianov u Brna (today part of the city of Brno, Czech Republic)
7.
Image: Pola/Pula (nowadays Croatia): the harbour and the Roman Arena
Date: 24 October [?]
Sender: Dumitru Vasilean
Addressee: Anuța Aleman in Szászcsór, Hungary (today Săsciori, Alba county, Romania)
Military seal: *Seeminen Komando*
8.
Image: Bratislava/Pozsony (nowadays Slovak Republic), Fadrusz quay
Date: 17 June 1915
Sender: anonymous
Addressee: Elena Marcu in Spring (Alba county, Romania)
9.
Image: Szeged (Hungary), view of the Tisza river
Date: 13 February 1916
Sender: unknown
Addressee: the parents of the sender: Jan Kratochvíl, worker, Libeznice u Prahy in Bohemia (nowadays Czech Republic)

10.
Image: Hradec Králové (nowadays Czech Republic), Havlíčkova Street
Date: 11 April 1917
Sender: unknown
Addressee: Dr. Napoleon Biháry, *Kanonen Bateria 3, Feldpost 299*
11.
Image: Cluj/Kolozsvár (nowadays Romania), the wooden statue of the Carpathians' guardsman
Date: 15 august 1916
Sender: Silviu
Addressee: Augustin Bud, student in Theology, Horgospatak in Szolnok-Doboka county (today Strâmbu, Cluj county, Romania)
12.
Image: Ljubljana/Laibach (nowadays Slovenia), general view
Date: 14 June 1917
Sender: unknown
Addressee: sender's brother Josef [?], at the *K.u.k. Technischefasungstelle, Elektroverkstätte. Feldpost 5*
Military seal: *Zensuriert. K.u.k. Zensur[...][?]*
13.
Image: Cluj/Kolozsvár (nowadays Romania): Erzsébet street and the bridge over the Someş river
Date: 4 January 1918
Sender: unknown
Addressee: sender's mother, Antonia Mička, Kostel, Moravia (today in Czech Republic)
The sender is part of a military unit located in Cluj, but officially located in Bucharest (*KK Stationskomando Bukarest*)
14.
Image: Budapest (Hungary), view of the Royal Palace
Date: 28 November 1916
Sender: Ioniță [?]
Addressee: Pelle Augusztá in Szatmárnémeti (today Satu-Mare, Romania)
15.
Image: Maramureş/Máramaros [?] (nowadays Romania), the Tartar Pass
Date: 6 June 1915
Sender: anonymous
Addressee: Ms. Tonči Týdlová in Praha/Prague, Bohemia (today Czech Republic)
16.
Image: Băile Herculane/Herkulesfürdő/Herkulesbad, Hungary (nowadays Romania), general view
Date: 28 October 1915
Sender: Matis (?)
Addressee: sender's parents, František Kalovec, peasant from Cehnice, Bohemia (nowadays Czech Republic)
Unclear seal
17.
Image: Arad (nowadays Romania), aerial view
Date: 1914 (?)
Sender: anonymous
Addressee: sender's parents: Benyo [?] in Selmecbánya (today Banská Štiavnica, Slovak Republic)
18.
Image: Sopron (Hungary), view of the city centre
Date: 26 January 1916

Sender: unclear name

Addressee: Josef Hrubý, merchant from Roztoky u Jilemnice (nowadays Czech Republic)

KK I. Ersatzkompanie [?]

19.

Kotor/Cattaro (nowadays Croatia), view of the bay of Kotor

Date: undated

Sender: anonymous

Addressee: František Brtník from Urbanov [?], Moravia (nowadays Czech Republic)

Unreadable military seal, probably the seal of the KK Navy

20.

Image: Subotica/Szabadka (today Serbia), view of the town hall

Date: 26 October 1918

Sender: Luda

Addressee: Simonovics Mihály (sender's uncle and aunt), Myjava (nowadays Slovak Republic)

21.

Image: Szeged (Hungary), view of the city with the Tisza bridge

Date: 15 December 1915

Sender: anonymous

Addressee: sender's wife and son at the address: Ladislau Svoboda, Veltrusy, Bohemia (nowadays Czech Republic)

22.

Image: Novi Sad/Ujvidék (today Serbia), view of the town hall

Date: unclear

Sender: anonymous

Addressee: Františka Brožková, wife of police constable in Německý Brod in Bohemia (nowadays Havlíčkův Brod, Czech Republic)

Unclear military seal

KK Trans(mission) Div(ision) N. 2

Luteranspital Ujvidék

23.

Trenčianske Teplice/Trencséteplisz (today Slovak Republic), view of the park

Date: unreadable

Sender: Anka

Addressee: Ms. Margit Machácsek, Szakolcza (today Skalica, Slovak Republic)

24.

Image: the postcard is representing a general view of Budapest, but sent from Lancrăm (nowadays in Alba county, Romania)

Date: 19 October 1917 [?]

Sender: Longin

Addressee: Vasile Petraşcu, Szászváros (today Orăştie, Hunedoara county, Romania)

25.

The postcard is representing a view of Veldes-Bled (Krain, nowadays Slovenia) and was sent from Lugoj/Lugos (Banat, nowadays Romania)

Date: 21 September 1918

Sender: Elena

Addressee: Milly Secoşianu, Budapest

26.

Image: Emperor Franz Joseph Railway Station, Prague (Praha, Czech Republic)

Date: Prague, 23 March 1916

Sender: E. Cs.

Addressee: Mrs Endréné Orosz, Apahida, Cluj County, Hungary (nowadays Romania)

Military seal: *K.u.k. Infanterieregiment von Boroëvic Nr. 51 III. Ersatzkompanie*

27.
Image: Ljubljana (Slovenia), the courtly square and the castle
Date: L[jubljana], 25 September 1915.
Sender: Pisti (?)
Addressee: Mrs Gézáné Várady, Debrecen, Hungary
Military seal: *Vereinsreservespital „Leoninum” in Laibach, Militärpflege*
28.
Image: The Parliament of Budapest
Date: Budapest, 5 May 1915, the 16th Garrison Hospital
Sender: József Darvas
Addressee: József Darvas, Csátószeg, Csík county (today Cetățuia, Harghita county, Romania)
29.
Image: Budapest, the City Park Lake
Date: [Budapest], 16 June [1915]
Sender: Dezső
Addressee: Marosvásárhely (today Târgu Mureș, Mureș county, Romania)
30.
Image: Trencsénteplíc, the cure-salon (today Trenčianske Teplice, Slovak Republic)
Date: 22 March 1917
Sender: Kiss [...]
Addressee: V. Szeghalmy, Res[serve] Spital Gr. II., Szolnok (Hungary)
Military seal: *Vörös-Kereszt Kórház Trencsénteplitz* (Red Cross Hospital Trenčianske Teplice)
31.
Image: Trencsénteplíc, a view of the city (today Trenčianske Teplice, Slovak Republic)
Date: Tr.Teplic, 15 October 1915
Sender: Rezső
Addressee: Malvin Grüner, Budapest
32.
Image: Budapest, the Chain Bridge (Hungary)
Date: Budapest, 14 November 1918
Sender: Eta
Addressee: József Báthory, Zilah (today Zalău, Sălaj county, Romania)
33.
Image: Lwów/Lemberg, the Invalid House (today Lviv, Ukraine)
Date: 4 August 1915
Sender: [Mezei] Adolf
Addressee: Mrs Adolfné Mezei, Karczag, Szolnok county, Hungary
Military seal: *K.u.k. Militärzensur Lemberg*
34.
Image: Lwów/Lemberg, the Halytska Square (today Lviv, Ukraine)
Date: 23 January 1916
Sender: Marci
Addressee: Mrs Miksáné Weisz, Budapest
Military seal: *K.u.k. Infanterie Regiment Nr. 23 III. Feldbataillon*
35.
Image: Lwów/Lemberg, The Bernardine Square (today Lviv, Ukraine)
Date: 24 January 1916
Sender: Marci
Addressee: Mrs Miksáné Weisz, Budapest
Military seal: *K.u.k. Infanterie Regiment Nr. 23 III. Feldbataillon*
36.
Image: Prague, Svatopluk Čech Bridge (Czech Republic)

Date: Prague, 20 September 1915

Sender: J[ozsi?] Ferges

Addressee: Mrs Zsigmondné Kemény, Aranyos Torda, Hungary (today Turda, Cluj county, Romania)

Military seal: *K.u.k. Quarantänspital in Prag Militärkrankenpflege*

37.

Image: Prague, Archduke Franz Ferdinand Bridge (Czech Republic)

Date: Prague, 20 September 1915

Sender: Dady [Jozsi?]

Addressee: József Kemény, Aranyos Torda, Erdély (today Turda, Cluj county, Transylvania, Romania)

Military seal: *K.u.k. Quarantänspital in Prag Militärkrankenpflege*

38.

Image: Cilli, Deutsches Haus/The German Cultural Center (today Celje, The Celje Hall, Slovenia)

Date: Marburg, 14 November 1915, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon

Sender: Sándor [Zakariás]

Addressee: Mrs Sándorné Zakariás, Nagyenyed, Alsófehér county, Hungary (today Aiud, Alba county, Romania)

Military seal: *Zensuriert K.u.K. [Militär]zensur Marburg*

39.

Image: Kufstein with Inn detail (Austria)

Date: 11 January 1917, 11 o'clock in the morning

Sender: Sándor [Zakariás]

Addressee: Mrs Sándorné Zakariás, Nagyenyed, Alsófehér county (today Aiud, Alba county, Romania)

40.

Image: Kowel, the Post-Telegraph Station (today Kovel, Ukraine)

Date: Kowel, 14 May 1916, 9 o'clock in the morning (today Kovel, Ukraine)

Sender: Dady

Addressee: Mrs Béláné Papp, Kolozsvár, Hungary (today Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Military seal: *K.u.k. Bahnhofskomm[ando Kowel]*

41.

Image: Graz, Bismarck Square (Austria)

Date: 29 August 1917

Sender: Dady

Addressee: Mrs Béláné Papp, Kolozsvár (today Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

42.

Image: Jindřichův Hradec/ Neuhaus, The Statue of the Holy Trinity (today Jindřichův Hradec, Czech Republic)

Date: Neuhaus, 20 January 1916 (today Jindřichův Hradec, Czech Republic)

Sender: Kristóf P.

Addressee: Miss Mariska Merza, Szamosújvár, Hungary, Transylvania, Szolnok-Doboka county (today Gherla, Cluj county, Romania)

43.

Image: Jindř. Hradec, The Square (today Jindřichův Hradec, The Peace Square, Czech Republic)

Date: Neuhaus, 26 February 1916 (today Jindřichův Hradec, Czech Republic)

Sender: Kristóf

Addressee: Miss Mariska Merza, Szamosújvár, Hungary, Transylvania, Szolnok-Doboka county (today Gherla, Cluj county, Romania)

44.

Image: Jindř. Hradec., general view of the city (today Jindřichův Hradec, Czech Republic)

Date: Neuhaus, 29 March 1916 (today Jindřichův Hradec, Czech Republic)

Sender: Kristóf

Addressee: Miss Mariska Merza, Szamosújvár, Hungary, Transylvania, Szolnok-Doboka county (today Gherla, Cluj county, Romania)

45.

Image: A medieval (?) castle on the hill, in the foreground a settlement and a river

Date: -

Sender: Anonymous soldier („the soldier in love”)

Addressee: It seems that the soldier wrote two postcards and he numbered them with Roman numbers. The present postcard is the second one, holding only the text. Probably the missing first postcard held the addressee.

46.

Image: Zagreb, the Jelačić Square (today Croatia)

Date: Zágráb, 4 December 1915, 11 o'clock in the morning, the 80th day (Zagreb, today Croatia)

Sender: Illegible

Addressee: Mrs Jánosné Németh Jr.

Military seal: *Zensur[iert?]* 4

47.

Image: Karlsbad, the Mill Colonnade (today Mlýnská kolonáda in Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic)

Date: before 2 July 1918

Sender: a certain comrade

Addressee: Lajos Jordáky, I. R 51 III. Ers. Komp., Prag, Böhmen, Albrechts Kaserne

Military seal: 2 XXXVIII *Mako* (?)

48.

Image: Railway Bridge over river Inn (Austria)

Date: 12 July

Sender: Elek

Addressee: Lenke Teleki, Marosvásárhely, Hungary (today Târgu Mureș, Mureș county, Romania)

Military seal: *Von der Arm in Feldt*

49.

Image: Kolozsvár, The National Theatre (today Cluj-Napoca, Cluj county, Romania)

Date: before 2 July 1916

Sender: Gyurica [Horváth]

Addressee: Corporal István Horváth, Gyulafehérvár (today Alba Iulia, Romania)

50.

Image: Kecskemét, the Kossuth Square (Hungary)

Date: Kecskemét, 15 December 1917

Sender: Jancsi Kovács

Addressee: József Ronezoy, the Director of the State High School, Erzsébetváros, Kis-Küküllő vármegye (today Dumbrăveni, Sibiu county, Romania).

A DEVOTED FRIEND AND ALLY, HENRI MATHIAS BERTHELOT

The Image of The French General Presented in The *Românul* Newspaper



CARMEN ȚĂGȘOREAN

Abstract

The first global confrontation, which led to the death of a large number of civilians and soldiers, and also to the reconfiguration of the borders and to the disintegration of empires, brought Romania's first major victory in history – the unification of all Romanians. An important contribution came from some reliable friends, most of them of French nationality. The effort, dedication, commitment, perseverance and love for the Romanian people turned the French General Henri Mathias Berthelot into a national hero. General Berthelot's memoirs and the scientific volumes had the power to relay historical facts and sometimes feelings. An alternative point of view is provided by the Romanian press in Transylvania. The purpose of this study is to present the image of General Henri Berthelot as it was presented in the press articles of the newspaper *Românul* (*The Romanian*) during WWI.

Keywords

World War I, press, Henri Mathias Berthelot, image, *Românul*

"A NATION USUALLY grows in a certain space named homeland", D. Gusti used to say¹. For Transylvanians, homeland meant Romania, and the incorporation of Transylvania to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire was the equivalent of losing a part of their souls of simple people who couldn't care less about the power and political games played behind the scenes by the Western powers. The hope of unifying the country remained just as strong and when the First World War broke out the chance for their hope to be finally fulfilled grew exponentially. By unifying all territories inhabited by Romanians into one country meant not a bigger land, but, first of all, "the gain of that soul of the next of kin living beyond the Carpathians who had been burning for so long with love, hope and expectation"². Winning that battle meant "a victory of patriotism over egoism"³, each family paying a blood tribute for the fulfilment of the national unification dream⁴. In the Old Kingdom (Romania proper) the opinions on the benefits the war could bring by opting for an alliance with either camp were widely divided, both counting the possible gains and losses. If Romania joined the Central Powers, Transylvania would stay in the Empire. An alliance with the Entente would bring the loss of Bessarabia and Bucovina. But there was still a great difference between the two alternatives. It was only implied, but not stated and publicized. The Entente's purpose was to free all the peoples in the German and Austria-Hungarian Empires and have them gain statehood. This secret plan would bring all those peoples into the fold and make the war winnable. A symbol of this goal was Alsace-Lorraine. For the Romanians, Transylvania, Bessarabia, and Bucovina were the same symbol as Alsace-Lorraine was for the French⁵. The authorities' hesitation to enter the war was not necessarily due to the army's capability to wage war, but to the lack of battlefield experience in modern warfare⁶. The hasty entrance to the war due to France's urge took place with the promise that Romania would benefit of allied military advisory supervision, namely a military delegation under the command of Henri Berthelot⁷. Even today, the Romanian army owes gratitude to France and respect to General Henri Berthelot for the devotion and friendship shown to us during the ups and downs of those events in WWI: "Enthusiastic in feeling, methodical in action, he was a priceless friend on good and bad days alike"⁸.

1. D. Gusti, *Sociologia națiunii și a războiului* (București: Editura Floare Albastră, 1995), 5.
2. Ion Agârbiceanu, „Acțiunea României. Valoarea etică a ei”, *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 197 (1916), 1.
3. D. Gusti, *Sociologia națiunii*, 135.
4. Constantin Kirițescu, *Istoria războiului pentru întregirea României, 1916-1919*, 1st vol., (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1989), 23.
5. Constantin Kirițescu, *Istoria războiului*, 1st vol., 122.
6. I. G. Duca, *Amintiri politice*, 2nd vol. (Munchen: Jon Dumitru-Verlag, 1981), 28.
7. Gheorghe I. Florescu, *Misiunea militară franceză din România (1916-1919)*, I-II.
8. Constantin Kirițescu, *Istoria războiului* 2nd vol., 21.

The purpose of this study is to bring to light the portrait of the famous Gen. Henri Berthelot as presented by the newspaper *Românul* during WWI. *Românul* [*The Romanian*], the official newspaper of the Romanian National Party, “a political daily with a literary page”, based in Arad, was published between 1 January 1911 until 28 February 1916, 26 October until 22 March 1922, 1927 until 1932, and from 1935 until 1938. Between 1916 and 1918, *Românul* [*The Romanian*] appeared only a few times because it was closed down by the Hungarian authorities⁹. The editing team was made up of leading Romanian intellectuals who supported the unification: Vasile Goldiș, Al. Vaida-Voevod, Teodor Mihali, Iuliu Maniu, etc. In the first issue, the editors published on the front page an appeal “To all Romanians!” in which they expressed the direction the newspaper was about to take: “to awake and strengthen the national conscience by enlightening the souls about the great truth that the national rights were the absolute condition for cultural and economic progress”. The paper’s manifesto specifically stated the roles of the press and the journalists toiling this field: “We know what power the press has, especially in times of peoples’ awakening, and that’s why we value both the talent and the honest souls that nurture them” [...] The journalists of a nation, must be, first and foremost, dedicated, in blood and soul, to the spirit of national solidarity. Moreover, responsible journalists of a responsible nation must be the most valuable and stable expression of national cohesion.”¹⁰ All contributors to the newspaper played a key role in the Great Unification for which they worked tirelessly.

Perceived as a national hero in Romania, as the saviour of the nation, as he contributed significantly to the victories of the Romanian armies, the General slipped into oblivion out of political purposes after WWI, during WWII, and the communist era. That’s why very little is known about this hero and especially his great contribution to the allies’ victory in WWI and his “keen and profound love” he had for the Romanians and their country¹¹. His contemporaries’ attitude towards the General was divided – some saw him as a true hero serving Romania, others saw him as the Entente man, doing his job on assignment. The articles in *Românul* fall into the first category, praising a national hero whose contribution to the unification of all Romanian territories into one country was crucial. Most articles published during his visits in Transylvania were entirely congratulatory. There are few details on military matters in these articles. Most of them portray the man, the General, whose qualities as a soldier, a diplomat or

9. Simion, Eugen et. all., *Dicționarul general al literaturii*, (București: Encyclopedic Universe, 2006), 676.

10. Hangiu, I., *Presa românească de la începuturi până în prezent. Dicționar cronologic 1790-2007*, 1^a vol., 18 februarie 1790-decembrie 1916 (București: comunicare.ro, 2008), 759-762.

11. Glenn E. Torrey, foreword to *General Henri Berthelot, Jurnal și corespondență. 1916-1919*, 2nd ed., (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2000), 9-10.

as simple citizen are emphasized to pinpoint his contribution to the Romanian army's victory and justify the grandstanding of the French general.

A personality of the French army, one of the most important of WWI, with a rich battlefield experience (Marne, Soissons, Champagne, Verdun), Henri Berthelot was born on 7 December 1861 in the Loire district. He graduated from the famous Saint-Cyr military academy and later, The Superior of War, from Paris. At 55, he was at the peak of his intellectual and professional maturity when he arrived in Iași on 15 October 1916 as head of the French mission that was going to extend up to May 1919 when he oversaw the retreat of the defeated armies of the Central Powers from the Romanian territories¹². Our great historian, Nicolae Iorga, wrote that Henri Berthelot "was not only a general" but, first of all, an ally, a friend of the Romanians with whom he lived all the trials and tribulations of those days when the fate of the nation was being decided¹³.

Although Ion I. C. Brătianu wished that Gen. Maudhuy had led the French mission, when Henri Berthelot arrived, the Romanian prime-minister had to admit that the general was the right man for the job as the Chief of Staff of the Romanian Army: "I salute in you, if you wish, the Chief of Staff of the Romanian Army"¹⁴. It was an expression of gratitude for the help France was sending to us. Gen. Henri Berthelot arrived at a critical point when 2/3 of Romania was occupied by the Central Powers forces, and the Romanian army, including the government, retreated to Moldova. After the lost battles of Argeș and Neajlov "the entire country had to retreat to Moldova which became the undefeated fortress of Romania and had to endure a lot of misery that an unfair fate had in store for her"¹⁵. Henri Berthelot was against any more retreats before the advancing Central Powers. After dining with the King at Periș, the General wrote: "there is a tense atmosphere, and people's faces show anxiety. [...] we have to boost the morale, beginning with the leaders whose will to win should not be altered by the first failures". Boosting the morale of the troops, the army's reorganization, and convincing the leaders to resist the retreat were the first issues on which Henri Berthelot focused¹⁶. Henri Berthelot's optimism and jovial character both contributed to the success of the first stage in turning the situation of the country around. Nicolae Iorga wrote "with his joyful personality, the optimistic French general, [...] whose firm poise and humour showed the French nobility at its best, was able to lift the soul"¹⁷ or, as Queen Mary described him, "a jovial man, round in body and full of invigorating

12. General Henri Berthelot, *Jurnal și corespondență. 1916-1919*, 2nd ed., (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2000), 11-12.

13. N. Iorga, *Oameni care au fost*, 2nd vol., (București: Editura pentru Literatură, 1967), 266.

14. Șerban Rădulescu-Zoner, Beatrice Marinescu, *Bucureștii în anii primului Război Mondial, 1914-1918*, (București: Editura Albatros, 1993), 83.

15. Aurel Cosma, *Generalul Berthelot și dezrobirea românilor* (București: Imprimeriile Independență, 1932), 7.

16. General Henri Berthelot, *Jurnal și corespondență*, 71.

17. N. Iorga, *Supt trei regi* (București, 1932), 232.

optimism”¹⁸, even the journalists of the time said that “his face wins you over at the first glance, with his honest goodness and joviality [...] This gentle guest had a gesture of thankfulness or affection for everyone.”¹⁹

Taking charge of the French missions in Romania, against all odds, Henri Berthelot demonstrated professionalism and devotion to the Entente’s cause, but also for the Romanians’ interests. Some notes from his personal diary back this up. When the issue of taking the Romanian army over the border in Russia was raised, Henri Berthelot staunchly opposed it, telling the King: “there is always a chance to stay, as it is a duty to stand to the last swath of Romanian soil”²⁰ or, “I’m content of my discussions with Albert Thomas, whom I managed to get interested in Romania’s problems. At a time when it seems that Russia is caving in, it is good for France to remember that we have a 500,000 army loyal to us and 200,000 recruits at the ready.”²¹ The General’s devotion to the Romanians’ cause didn’t go unnoticed by the Russian General Gurko, who, after a meeting on the reorganization of the Romanian army on Russian soil, declared in Kiev, on 22 January 1917, that Henri Berthelot “was more Romanian than all Romanians.”²² There were voices that claimed the anti-peace propaganda purported by Henri Berthelot was due to his affiliation with the Entente. During the time the Romanians were ready to sign a separate peace with the Central Powers, Henri Berthelot continued to support the Romanian interests, emphasizing Romania’s valuable contribution to the war effort²³, although he spoke openly against a separate peace²⁴. Both Alexandru Averescu and Constantin Arghetoiu were upset by the French General’s attitude, with the ease he was contemplating the situation, in spite of the fact that the only hope Romanians had was coming from France. “I left from Berthelot’s upset. In those trying moments our only hope came from France. [...] We were about to be all alone before the Germans and our fate was sealed.”²⁵ The reorganization of the army and the defeat of the German forces at Mărășești were Berthelot’s achievements, as the General had fought against the separate peace all along. His intense diplomatic activity and his will to fight on, his dedication to the Romanian cause made it possible for Romanians to turn tables on the Germans and win big. A journalist wrote he noticed that Berthelot shed a tear when the humiliating separate peace was signed²⁶.

18. Maria, Regina României, *Povestea vieții mele*, 3rd vol. (București: Editura Eminescu, 1991), 84.

19. Cor., „Generalul Berthelot în Sibiu și Săliște”, *Românul*, 49, (1918/1919): 5-6.

20. General Henri Berthelot, *Jurnal și corespondență*, 111.

21. General Henri Berthelot, *Jurnal și corespondență*, 154-155.

22. General Henri Berthelot, *Jurnal și corespondență*, 120.

23. General Henri Berthelot, *Jurnal și corespondență*, 283.

24. Constantin Arghetoiu, *Pentru cei de mâine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*, 3rd vol., V part (1916-1917), (București: Humanitas, 1992), 97.

25. Constantin Arghetoiu, *Pentru cei de mâine*, 112-113.

26. „Sunt foarte fericit că mă regăsesc între concetățenii mei Generalul Berthelot către episcopul Aradului”, *Românul*, 49 (30 decembrie 1918- 12 ianuarie 1919), 1-2.

In these conditions, Berthelot's mission in Romania was called off and he was supposed to return to France. Beginning with 5 March, the French General had a number of meetings with high-rank officials to say good bye: the King, Queen Mary, Ion I. C. Brătianu, Take Ionescu, General Prezan, but also the prime-minister Alexandru Averescu in a last attempt to talk him out of signing the peace. I. C. Duca wrote in his journal about the moment: "I tried to put into this our total gratitude and empathy and give this departure a sincere note of regret that it fully deserved. [...] We all had tears in our eyes."²⁷ The same kind of emotion can be found all reports on Berthelot's visits in Transylvania. At the parade given in his honour in Sibiu "The General was watching it with tears of joy in his eyes."²⁸ The mission given to him was not a simple military exercise – Henri Berthelot took it to his heart and fell in love with the nation he was assigned to help. His dedication to the cause was firm and that didn't change even when it was called off. In spite of all hardships Romania was facing, the General, who opposed a separate peace because it was against the interests of both the Entente and Romania's, didn't give up hope. "I'm not saying good bye, but see you soon!" This reveals another facet of the General's character – generosity, specific to intelligent people, capable of noble feelings. It is believed that his comeback was due exactly to his dedication to the Romanian cause – to see the country unified once and for all. The press mentioned this paternal care of the father who thought "with love [...] of his Romanians" in whose midst he returned as a liberator. In Romanians' minds Transylvania was similar to the French Alsace, some sort of bond between the two nations in which the General was "trapped" emotionally: "We would like the great General to understand our soul which belongs to the loyal Latin brother from the East".²⁹ To underline this idea of dedication and loyalty, the articles in *Românul* always used terms of next of kin, like brother or parent.

The General returned. As a result of the allies' victories on the Western front, the General was assigned a mop-up operation in the Balkans – to clear the territory of the German forces. On 10 November 1918, a memorable date, King Ferdinand of Romania ordered general mobilization and Gen. Berthelot crossed the Danube from Bulgaria, a staunch enemy of Romania and ally of Germany. The French General sent a motivational message to the troops: "The French troops are crossing the Danube today to help you liberate yourselves from the oppression the enemy thought you would always be under. [...] The clock of vengeance, of justice has just tolled. [...] Soldiers, your battalions should join ours. Peasants, rise and pick up your weapons against your invaders. This is the call of the motherland Romania for which you have suffered. This is the call of your government that have made all sacrifices for a Greater Romania [...] Rise up, Romanian brothers,

27. I. G. Duca, *Amintiri politice*, 176.

28. Cor., *Generalul Berthelot în Sibiu și Săliște*, 5-6.

29. Corespondent, „Berthelot”, *Românul*, 41 (1918): 1-2.

and hit them hard!³⁰ His qualities as a public speaker were noticed also by newspaper people who accompanied him on his visits to Sibiu and Săliște: “right off the bat we have to admit that the General is himself an excellent speaker, with an inexhaustible treasure of spirit that he knows when to insert into phrases of impeccable perfection.”³¹ Moreover, the General was a good communicator, working the crowds at every opportunity: “In the railroad station in Caransebeș, Berthelot got off the train and mingled freely with the Romanian peasants, whom he tried to speak with. He patted children on their heads. He was really friendly.”³² Besides, Henri Berthelot used body language to communicate: “the General welcomes people with a great smile, talks to them from the heart and holds their rough hands into his. What an unforgettable image!”³³

The second French mission in Romania had also the goal to support the Romanian army in the offensive to liberate Transylvania, Muntenia, and Dobrogea, but that wasn't necessary because the armistice was signed in Compiègne and the war ended. If the first mission entered Romania secretly, the second came in with large crowds welcoming them, an attitude adopted by the Transylvanians later on: “the parades in their honour have just got bigger, and they do it every day. [...] There are celebrations everywhere. Ordinary people take me to dine with them without any protocol, out of friendliness.”³⁴ The same feelings are shown by the royal couple who invites him to army parades, along with the other officials. The occasion is noted by Constantin Argetoianu, who confessed that “he had never lived [...] moments more heartfelt than those.”³⁵ The triumphant entrance King Ferdinand and General Henri Berthelot made is also mentioned by the French press from which *Românul* carries a fragment³⁶. The crowd received them with great enthusiasm, “surrounding the General.”³⁷ It was just the beginning. Starting in December 1918, the General toured the country on a fact-finding mission in the two provinces – Banat and Transylvania: “received with enthusiasm and parades of the villagers” (2 January 1919, Săliște)³⁸. People went to the streets with flowers and banners, and the bands played for the French military, “a reception only reserved to kings”. In Arad, an assassination attempt took place, but the bullets missed the General, and killed his driver instead³⁹. During those ten days in

30. Aurel Cosma, *Generalul Berthelot și dezrobirea românilor*, 16-17.

31. Cor., *Generalul Berthelot în Sibiu și Săliște*, 5-6.

32. Correspondent, *Berthelot*, 1-2.

33. „Sunt foarte fericit că mă regăsesc între concetățenii mei”, 1-2-3.

34. General Henri Berthelot, *Jurnal și corespondență*, 327.

35. Constantin Argetoianu, *Memorii. Pentru cei de mâine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*, 5th vol., 5th part (1918), (București: Editura Machiavelli, 1995), 180-181.

36. „Presa franceză despre reformele din România”, *Românul*, 13 (1919): 7.

37. „Interviul dlui Brătianu la ziarul Le Matin”, *Românul*, 21 (1919): 1-2.

38. General Henri Berthelot, *Jurnal și corespondență*, 337.

39. Aurel Cosma, *Generalul Berthelot*, 20.

Transylvania, Henri Berthelot was received everywhere with the greatest enthusiasm and joy, and he responded “deeply moved to the loving salute”. This kind of warm reception he was met with everywhere made him feel that the Greater Romania dream had already been accomplished, always ending his speeches with the phrase “Long live Greater Romania”.⁴⁰ The young men and women coming to greet him, dressed in traditional Romanian attire, made the General utter “you are the most beautiful guard of mine”. Journalists were happy because through these actions the people of Romania managed to get their message about the “warmth and the pure soul of Romanians” to the General.⁴¹ The enthusiasm of the masses in Lugoj made a reporter say: “no pen can possibly describe the joy on the arrival of Gen. Henri Berthelot, something never seen since the city was founded. The same image could have been seen only if a second Mihai Viteazu was to be born.” In each railroad station, the band played La Marseillaise and other tunes specially composed for the occasion: “said the General himself, who listened to it twice, tears in his eyes”.⁴²

The villagers from around Arad city came in droves to welcome the General. The moment was darkened by the assassination attempt perpetrated by the Hungarians, “out of envy and hatred for the beautiful welcome of the General” in which 20 people were killed and 40 wounded. For Henri Berthelot it was “the first encounter with the Hungarians, matching their history that he knew, and this kind of salute he will take to the Entente, whose banners they tore and whose General they booed”.⁴³ This was the picture of the tour of Transylvania that *Românul* carried, able to show the warmth and profound love the Transylvanians had for the General, who earned his nickname – The Liberator. Nicolae Iorga described all these and said that the “liberator” was the same man who in the summer of 1917 played an essential role in the victorious battles that redeemed the honour of the Romanian armies”, a man to whom the Romanians owed their newly-won independence and freedom in Transylvania and who made it possible “for the lively Transylvanians to live in liberty under their flag that had been banned for a thousand years”. General Henri Berthelot took the role as a mentor to the Romanian people very seriously. He studied the culture, traditions, history, social organization and became a fine connoisseur of the country.⁴⁴ Each and every article brings accolades to “the great General”, whose contribution “All Romanians from around Arad city came to appreciate and welcome, as deserved, the great general and friend of the nation-Berthelot”.⁴⁵ In his mind, the great French General

40. „Generalul Berthelot în Sibiu și Săliște”, *Românul* 49 (30 decembrie 1918-12 ianuarie 1919): 5.

41. „Cea mai frumoasă gardă”, *Românul*, 49 (30 decembrie 1918-12 ianuarie 1919): 4.

42. Corespondent, *Berthelot*, 1-2.

43. „Demonstrații sângeroase contra românilor în Arad”, *Românul*, 42 (1918): 1-3.

44. „Aprecieră făcută de d. Profesor Iorga scrisorii generalului Berthelot”, *Românul*, 23 (1919): 7.

45. „Generalul Berthelot în Arad”, *Românul*, 40 (1918): 3.

likened Transylvania to Alsace, sensing the drama the Romanians were living through: “travelling through this land, the General will remember that Transylvania was the Romanian Alsace”. The victory at Mărășești was due to him: “Berthelot can be proud that he was able to raise the morale of the Romanian troops so high that they were able of a resounding victory at Mărășești”.⁴⁶

The French victory at Marne was acclaimed by the entire Romanian nation who understood its importance: “Romanians knew that a victory of France will be the victory of all those who longed for liberty, while a victory of the others would have silenced the voices of hope for a long time”. The manifestations of empathy of the Transylvanians were not public, but only kept in their souls: “The oppressed Romanians only in their souls were with the French, as any public display would have been met with prison and internment”.⁴⁷

At the diplomatic levels and on the corridors of power, the General, who represented France, also enjoyed a great deal of affection and respect: “We salute you, sir commandant, with the heart full of love, just as a little and humble sister salutes her older sister who has just become queen”. This is part of the speech by dr. Ion Erdélyi, who at the time, was “the fully accredited minister of the Romanian Council and military attaché in Budapest”. He went on to hail “the always victorious commander, who, in the darker moments of fate, stood by with actions and comfort to support us” (Berthelot’s visit to Seghedin)⁴⁸.

Gen. Henri Berthelot is depicted as a “distinguished guest”, “a great general”, “a friend of our nation”, a liberator of our people, who has the merit of getting close to the common folk (“he expressed his affection for the cause of the entire nation”). Although the purpose of his tours of the country had not been revealed to the general public, the gratitude for his efforts on behalf of the Romanians was good enough to guarantee a triumphant reception everywhere he went. There was hope that the General would intervene for the liberation of Romanian land occupied by Serbs. The people’s enthusiasm and hopes (“grandiose receptions had been set up”) made the General change his initial plans and stay longer on his tours. In Caransebeș and Lugoj the railroad station was packed with “an immense crowd” who received him with standing ovations. Behind the stony face of the battle-hardened general lay a sensitive man for whom the suffering of the Romanians living in occupied territories was building up a strong desire to help alleviate their problem: “Gen. Berthelot was visibly impressed by these warm receptions”. Sometimes, only in a few lines, we can see the complex personality of the man who had demonstrated over and over again courage and will-power, but ready

46. Ion Clopoșel, „Berthelot”, *Românul*, 41 (1918), 1.

47. I. Clopoșel, „Berthelot”, *Românul*, VII, 41 (16-29 decembrie 1918), 1.

48. M. Popoviciu, „Generalul Berthelot în Seghedin”, *Românul* 43 (20 decembrie 1918- 2 ianuarie 1919): 2.

to adapt quickly to a new situation, willing to take up issues raised by the local population and try to solve them⁴⁹.

“The great general Berthelot” or “the illustrious friend of the Romanians” are only two of the expressions that show up in the press articles. In all cities, the hosts organized ample public meetings, reserved only to statesmen or royalty. This way the contribution of the General to the Romanian victory was celebrated: “our love and gratitude for General Berthelot as Romanians requires one of the greatest receptions”. The French General was regarded as the saviour, a shield against adversity and despair, the only hope to unite the country: “this name is our talisman, the only hope and consolation.”⁵⁰ The General’s fame was known to Transylvanians from the beginning of the war when every defeat of the French triggered despair and every victory, hope.

General Henri Berthelot is depicted as an exception, whose contribution to the victory of the French army was essential, as he was endowed with a “rare gift”. The same gift was now put to work for the cause of Romanians. His assignment as a commander of the French mission in Romania came with an aura of a saviour, a symbol of the fight for liberty and national unification, from that day on, “the history of Romania having this name, Berthelot, on every page of her history”. He was the one to save the cream of the Romanian army by ordering the retreat to Moldova, along with all the grain supply of the Old Kingdom, a strategic move that worked in desperate times. Moreover, he reorganized the army, fortified the Siret border, inspected the war materiel and raised the troops’ morale that made the first victories possible: “Berthelot can be proud that he succeeded in raising the morale so high that the great victory at Mărășești was possible” – says the journalist. To describe the relationship between the General and Romanians, he is called “parent”. The word has the power to get the message straight to the point. For the Romanian people, so traditional, there was no closer relationship than parent-child, an indestructible and honest connection, in which the welfare of the child comes always first. It is somehow subjective, due to the emotional factor, but nonetheless, the General’s contribution saved the day and changed history. His presence in Romania made a world of difference, as he got involved in both military and social life at all levels and wherever he suggested change, it worked and showed results. In this context, the statement made by a journalist “that the General got to know us and he loves us” is not groundless. In his personal diary, General Henri Berthelot shows a lot of affection for the Romanian people, but not for the authorities. This is probably because the leaders were not as thrilled with the General as the common folk⁵¹.

Along the moral profile of the General, the journalists also made his physical portrait. The reader was aware of the General’s qualities and his proven military record, but had no idea what he looked like. He was: “huge, a calm face, lit with

49. „Generalul Berthelot în Arad”, 3.

50. „Sunt foarte fericit că mă regăsesc între concetățenii mei”, 1-2.

51. Corespondent, *Berthelot*, 1-2.

a smile of love and content". Every gesture was attributed to his love for the Romanian people⁵². A year later, the paper published another description, similar to the old one: "Mr. Berthelot is heavy built, has a healthy face, red, open look, with a friendly and well-balanced poise".⁵³ A few issues later, another portrait, when his impressive stature is employed to stress his sensitivity: "his tall and robust build seems a warning to keep distance from him. But his smile in his eyes and his face so serene makes everyone come close to him". The General doesn't shy away from contact with people, as he interacts with them and touches them. Take, for example, the impression the beautiful girls in folk attire made on the General, "the strong soldier with his face lit with love and warmth he feels for us".⁵⁴ The accent is on the eyes, these windows of the soul, "from the warm look of his eyes we understood all the empathy of the glorious French nation".⁵⁵

As reports on his visits hit the newsstands, the most visible word about the General was "love", which spoke volumes about what this son of France felt about the Romanians. Another aspect of the overwhelming feelings of the people towards the General was that it meant to send a signal of loyalty to the Entente. The relationship between the two peoples, French and Romanian, was supported by the General himself who saw it as an undeclared goal to raise the morale of the Romanians in Transylvania as "their aspirations [...] are close to fulfilment because the peace was not far off".⁵⁶ Gen. Henri Berthelot encouraged the people of Cluj with words like: "We waged war in the name of justice. Justice has prevailed. All nations, including the small ones, will benefit equally. I guarantee the Romanian people of the French people's empathy". He was always emotional in front of the Romanian crowds who worshipped him⁵⁷.

The description of General's tours also sheds light on his personality. A highly-educated man, he used to adjust to situations, making on-the-spot changes in the face of challenge. Like a gentleman that he was, he always dealt with the women's delegations first. The General's affection for the Romanian peasants, whose struggle was honest and authentic was openly expressed, his feelings shown not only towards beautiful country women, but also towards simple and rugged men who gave their lives for the country⁵⁸. Each and every action of the General reveals a new facet of his personality. For example, when confronted with an assassination attempt in Arad city, when innocent civilians lost their lives, he swiftly ordered a French garrison to stay and keep the peace there⁵⁹. He treated his troops with

52. Correspondent, *Berthelot*, 1-2.

53. „Zile mari”, *Românul*, 1 (1919): 3.

54. „Generalul Berthelot în Arad”, *Românul*, 43 (20 decembrie 1918- 2 ianuarie 1919): 1-2.

55. „Zile mari”, *Românul*, 1 (1919): 3.

56. „Generalul Berthelot în Arad”, 1-2.

57. „Zile mari”, *Românul*, 3.

58. „Generalul Berthelot în Oradea Mare”, *Românul*, 43 (20 decembrie 1918- 2 ianuarie 1919): 2.

59. „Să se asigure ordinea publică”, *Românul*, 43 (20 decembrie 1918- 2 ianuarie 1919), 2-3.

personal care, making sure that every of his soldiers was treated properly and fairly. He held the military uniform in the highest regard. He treated the soldiers under his command with respect and fatherly care. He had poise and energy. He used to make quick decisions and military commanders never hesitated to carry out his orders. He intervened to liberate Cpt. Ameil, charged with fraternization with the Hungarians, from Romanian detention⁶⁰.

A year after Henri Berthelot's visit to Arad, *Românul* published an article to bring homage the event and bring homage to the man whose decisive contribution to the reorganization of the army led to the resounding victories at Oituz, Mărăști, and Mărășești. One year later, the Romanians were still grateful to him because he hadn't forgotten them and came back for the liberation of the country. His speech at his first departure of the French mission illustrated his love for Romanians and his devotion to the cause assigned to him. In those times of grief and despair in the first stage of the war, the only one who gave them hope was the General, "who never left them" and who was the first to return when the opportunity arose."⁶¹

The Romanians' gratitude didn't stop at parades and speeches. In Arad city, authorities named a street after him⁶². Later, one of the police stations, too⁶³.

Conclusions

IF WE wanted to summarize Henri Berthelot's activity in Romania during his two mandates as commander-in-chief of the French missions here, the word to fit his portrait would be HERO in the newspaper *Românul*. No Romanian general commanded as much respect and adulation from the masses or attention and accolades from newspapers as the French general. Believed to be the right man for such a huge task, Henri Berthelot represented the hope of the Transylvanians at a time when hope was in short supply even among allies. Regarded as a real hero in everything he did, General Henri Berthelot is among those rare men of providence who came in and changed history for the better in a country that ran low on hope and high on despair, a nation whose aspirations were dashed along history, a prisoner of false foreign promises and domestic demagoguery. He remains in the Romanian collective memory as a great man who contributed decisively to the unification of all Romanians into one state and to its emancipation that took the country into modern times.

60. „Fabrica de știri”, *Românul*, 14 (1919): 2.

61. „După un an. 29 decembrie 1918”, *Românul*, 193 (1919): 1.

62. „Românizarea străzilor din Arad”, *Românul*, 164 (1919): 3.

63. „Circumscripțiile polițienesci ale orașului Arad”, *Românul*, 167 (1919): 3.

A DIFFERENT FACE OF THE WAR

Romanian Habsburg Military Chaplains on the Home Front



ZAHARIA IONELA

Abstract

The Great War remained in historiography as the seminal event of the contemporary world. Historians and researchers from the field of humanities focused their attention again on this event, from a new perspective, which proves once again the repercussions of the event on all levels: politics, demographics, feelings, ideologies, medicine, food industry etc. One of the topics that need more attention is that of activities and the role of the Romanian military priests from Austria-Hungary in Transylvania. In this presentation/article I try not only to retrace the activities of the Romanian military priests on the home front but also to find out what daily life meant for the priests and to argue, by analysing the cases of six priests, that at the beginning of the war, some of them went to war driven by their loyalty towards their emperor and king. However, during the war, the myth of the “God old Emperor” was crushed by the unexpected turns of events that transformed loyalty into obligation, given by the holiness of the oath they took, the fear of the possibly bad consequences for their nation, compassion and honour. I believe this analysis to be a key element in understanding also the conduct of some Romanian soldiers, given the fact that the priests had an important influence upon them.

Keywords

World War One, Military Chaplains, Habsburg Romanians, Transylvania, Banat

Introduction

THE GREAT War remained in historiography as a seminal event in the contemporary world. Since the cultural turn from the 1990s on, historians focused their attention again on this event, from new perspectives, which show the repercussions not only on politics but also on demographics, feelings, ideologies, religiosity, medicine, food industry, gender, etc. These new approaches underlined at the same time that the war did not take place only on fighting fronts but also in the hinterland, where relatives of the soldiers, their life and ideas, became a matter of the state and were engaged in the war effort¹. As emphasized in *War and Faith* by Annette Becker, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire. Total War and Everyday life in World War I* by Maureen Healy, *Catholicism and the Great War. Religion and everyday life in Germany and Austria-Hungary* by Patrick Houlihan and *The Church of England and the Home Front, 1914-1918. Civilians, Soldiers and Soldiers and Religion in Wartime Colchester* by Robert Beaken, war experiences, on the battlefield or at home, cannot be fully understood without analysing the role played by religiosity and church.

The aim of this article is to focus on the activities and the role of the Romanian Habsburg military chaplains in Transylvania during the Great War and their relations with civil clergy, soldiers, civilians, imperial authorities, different cultural and political authorities. Moreover, it will underline that Habsburg Romanian clergy responded to all the sufferance brought by war with a sense of self-sacrifice in order to offer comfort to all those in need and gain the favours of the emperor for their nation's future.

After August 1914

ACCORDING TO military law from Austria-Hungary, priests, monks or chaplains were absolved from military service with guns. Even so, they still had duties towards their emperor and fatherland. After being ordained as priests, all theology students were - registered in the reserve of the Religious Service of the Army, which was mobilized in case of war.² This meant that almost 2,110 Orthodox clergy from Transylvania and Banat and other 1,087 Greek-Catholic from the same regions³ could have been mobilized to attend soldiers, wounded or prisoners on battlefields, in hospitals or prisoner-of-war camps in the hinterland.

1. Eva Krivanek, "War on Stage. Home Front Entertainment in European Metropolises 1914-1918", in *Other Fronts, Other Wars? First World War Studies on the Eve of the Centennial*, Ed. Joachim Bürgschwentner, Matthias Egger, Gunda Berth-Scalmani, Koninklijke Brill (Leiden - Boston, 2014), 370.
2. *Reichsgesetzblatt für das Kaiserthum Österreich*, LXVI (Jahrgang 1868): 438-448.
3. *Calendarul Partidului Național Român din Ungaria și Transilvania* (Arad: Editura și tiparul topografiei „Concordia”, 1915), 62, 68.

In Transylvania and Banat, as well as in Bucovina, the first reactions after the attack in Sarajevo was outrage, sadness and solidarity with the imperial house. Franz Ferdinand had been regarded by many representatives of the Habsburg Romanians as a guarantor of a future which was to counter the national homogenization policies powered by Budapest after 1867.⁴ These feelings were expressed by the Transylvanian Romanian political class from the outset of the conflict in the support for Franz Joseph's decision to declare war on Serbia. Romanian parliamentary Club published therein a manifesto which encouraged people to take part in the war effort. The same support was shown in the pastoral letters sent by the Orthodox and Greek-Catholic hierarchs in Transylvania, Banat, and Bucovina.⁵

These actions and Romania's neutrality encouraged, in the initial phase of the war, a wave of volunteering.⁶ Other reasons for this attitude were also a strong sense of duty, as Sextil Pușcariu emphasizes in his memoirs⁷, and the compassion for the aged emperor Franz Joseph, as chaplain Virgil Ciobanu remembered in his memoirs: "Popular was also the Kaiser, respected for his age and for the many misfortunes that have shaken the family, he was pitied and therefore loved."⁸ At the same time, there was another current which was against supporting the war effort. One illustrative example is the writer Octavian Goga. Because of his nationalistic ideas and attitude against the war he, and those who shared his ideas, sought refuge in Romania, where they were free to express openly their feelings and opinions.

The beginning of war meant the mobilization of hundreds of thousands of officers, soldiers, and implicitly of the clergy. In one register from the Orthodox parish, Saint Apostles Peter and Paul from Prejmer, a village near Brașov, priest George Ludu wrote to the archpriest in Brașov, Vasile Saftu, on 28th of July, that chaplain Ioan Ludu, his son, was mobilized and sent to serve the k.u. Honvedseg Army.⁹ In August 1914, church and priests had an important role in Transylvania, as they still were seen as spiritual, moral, political and cultural models in most of the com-

4. Liviu Maior, „Sarajevo 1914 și consecințele sale pentru românii din Austro-Ungaria” in *Primul Război Mondial. Perspectivă istorică și istoriografică*, ed. Ioan Bolovan, Gheorghe Cojocaru and Oana Mihaela Tămaș (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română - Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2015), 181-183.
5. *Telegraful Român*, 81 (2(15) august, 1914). *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 3532 (22 august 1914): 4; *Unirea*, 79 (August 1914); Roman R. Ciorogariu, *Zile trăite: Partea 1-a, Războiul Mondial până la Armistițiu*, (Oradea: Fundația Culturală Cele Trei Crișuri, 1994), 18.
6. Ioan I. Șerban, „Români în Armata Austro-Ungară în anii Primului Război Mondial”, *Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica*, 2-3 (1998-1999): 204.
7. Sextil Pușcariu, *Memorii* (București: Ed. Minerva, 1978), 7.
8. Radu Ciobanu, *Wiener Gemütlichkeit*, http://www.memoria.ro/marturii/perioade_istorice/inainte_de_1914/wiener_gemutlichkeit/1599/pagina-16/ (Accesed on: 01.10.2015).
9. *Protocolul de Eshibite al parohiei Prejmer*, vol. IX, 1914-1927, in Arhiva parohiei ortodoxe Sfinții Apostoli Petru și Pavel, Prejmer, Brașov County.

munities.¹⁰ The mobilization of priests was in this context important for the mood of the soldiers and support for the war.

According to a newspaper article published in May 1916 in *Revista preoților*, by that time around 15 percent from Habsburg Romanian clergy was either mobilized, either volunteered to serve as a military or subsidiary priest.¹¹ If we corroborate the total number of priests with the percent presented in the above-mentioned article we could say that around 480¹² Romanian Habsburg priests were sent only by 1916 to care for the spiritual necessities of more than half a million soldiers and officers. Most of them were sent there where they needed: close to the frontline. A smaller part remained in Transylvania and Banat to attend army personnel in the hinterland.

The tasks of military clergy that remained on the home front were diverse. Sometimes, part of their tasks were given also to the civil clergy. First of all, before troops were sent to the battlefield, festive ceremonies were organized, during which soldiers took the allegiance oath and priests, military as well as civil, asked for divine intercession.¹³ As the newspaper *Românul*, from Arad, presented to its readers on 11th of September 1914, an important part of these ceremonies played the sermon, which underlined the connection between the imperial house and his people, reminded of the bravery of ancestors and offered legitimacy to the war. This attitude is part of a war mentality which manifested all over the continent at the time. Everyone believed that the war was to be a short one, which will end until Christmas. The example of the ancestors was a stereotype used in sermons for two reasons: to show how the support for the throne must be and to point to the responsibility that soldiers had to continue the sacrifice for obtaining a better political situation for their nation and families.

A second important task was to offer comfort to soldiers who came back wounded and ill. After gathering the victims from the battlefield, those still alive who could be transported were sent to hospitals behind the front line. After a first medical check, they were put on special trains and sent forth into the monarchy, in hospitals. This was necessary in order to make room for the other injured that kept being brought from the battlefield. Since the trip was often long and some of the most seriously injured needed a priest to grant them the Holy Communion before death, the Apostolic Field Vicar, Emmerich Bjelik, and military authorities decided to use the civil clergy to take care of the wounded soldiers during trans-

10. Eugenia Bârlea, Phd Thesis: *Perspectiva lumii rurale asupra primul război mondial* (Cluj Napoca, Babeș-Bolyai University, 2000), 23-25.

11. *Revista preoților*, 6-7 (15/28 Mai 1916): 1. Subsidiary priests were civil priests which volunteered to attend the wounded and ill soldiers brought in hospitals close to the parish they were serving.

12. Until now we found no register or statistic with the exact number of mobilized Habsburg Romanian military chaplains.

13. *Românul* (11 September 1913): 3-4.

port. In this regard, the Ministry of War and the vicar sent in October 1914 to all bishoprics and dioceses an appeal to send priests, volunteers, to deal with the wounded and sick during their trip to the hospitals. In the appeal was specified that the priests who could speak several languages were especially to be sent.¹⁴ They were the so-called subsidiary priests and were paid for their support.¹⁵ As a newspaper article from *Românul* underlines, hospitals in time of war, as that one from Arad, were filled with Germans, Hungarians, Habsburg Romanians, Czechs, Serbians, or Russians. This situation was caused by the heterogeneous national composition of the Dual Monarchy and explains the necessity of multilingual personnel.

Besides priests who accompanied the wounded transports, nearly every military hospital had one chaplain in its benefit, which usually was a Catholic, as was specified in the regulations for religious service of the army during war time¹⁶. Because the wounded had different nationalities and confessions, the War Ministry, Department 9, by Order No. 12.153/1914, decided to leave the headquarters of the military districts to draw up statistics on confession and nationality of the wounded, prisoners-of-war and military personnel on their jurisdiction. Based on them, they requested military priests to address the needs on their territory.¹⁷

The duties of the priests towards the wounded and sick were to offer consolation, grant them the sacraments before death, registering the demises, performing funeral ceremonies and notifying the victims' families. They were important not only for the wounded, moribund and their families but also for doctors and medical staff, whose number was much too small,¹⁸ compared with the need, and whose work was greatly hampered by the lack of medical equipment and medicines. The work of the clergy and the medical staff was mostly of a teamwork, doctors tried to repair the body while the priest tried to heal the spiritual trauma, which sometimes could hold back the recovery.

Establishments to retrieve the wounded were organized throughout the Monarchy, especially in the cities. Those who functioned in Transylvania and Banat were coordinated by the military headquarters in Sibiu and Timișoara. Besides the distribution of the clergy, commanders of the military districts were empowered with certain decisions on assistance and contact with civilians, depending on orders from Vienna and Budapest, and the internal situation. The military command from Timișoara issued, for example, on 17 September 1914, an order concerning

14. *Prager Abendblatt*, 231 (6 octombrie 1914): 2; *Grazer Tagblatt*, 259 (6 octombrie 1914): 19, etc.

15. AT-OeStA, KA Mbeh AFV 179 Geschichte der Militärseelsorge.

16. *Dienstvorschrift für die Militärgeistlichkeit A 16-c*, (Vienna: Kaiserliche-königlichen Hof-und Staatsdruckerei, 1887).

17. *Reichspost*, 499 (20 octombrie 1914): 9.

18. Manfred Rauchensteiner, *Der Erste Weltkrieg und das Ende der Habsburgermonarchie 1914-1918*, (Weimar, Böhlau Verlag Wien, Köln) 221-225.

visits in military hospitals. The access was permitted only with a special pass. This was available for both priests and civilians. Another decision of 15 December, from the same institution, provided clarification on the leave during Christmas. According to it, the personnel detached at the command did not get leave. The decision took into account that unceasing battles demanded sending soldiers to the front whether it was Sunday or holiday, and the number of the wounded arriving continuously grew from day to day. Only on the afternoon of 24-25 December and 1st January, short dispensation could be granted, and only after carrying out the duties. Orthodox and Greek Catholics had the same rights, according to their calendar.¹⁹

Another important aspect of military clergy activities in hinterland was the missionary trips in all the cities or villages where they were sent and needed. Because the number of priests was not enough for all hospitals, religious minorities clergy often had to take missionary trips throughout the military district. Hospital priests had no lighter schedule. At the request of wounded soldiers and priests, the apostolic vicar decided shortly after the outbreak of war, that Catholics and Greek Catholics chaplains in hospitals keep daily vespers, read prayers to the Mother of God, utter the prayer for peace designed by the pope and give blessings and the sacraments to all the wounded. Everything had to be noted in special pastoral reports, which were considered essential for improving the service. For us, they are an important source in reconstructing some aspects from the daily life atmosphere on the home front. For example, in his report sent to the Apostolic Field Vicariate in Vienna, on 1st September 1915, military chaplain Dr. Josef Renai, chaplain of the military hospital in Caransebeș, wrote that each day at six and a half in the afternoon took place the evening prayers for the Holy Virgin. He received help from the Hungarian nuns who served as nurses. An important aspect mentioned in his report is the „lebhafter Beteiligung der Patienten, besonders den Ungarn”²⁰, the lively participation of those hospitalized there, especially the Hungarians. Romanians did not enter under his jurisdiction. The information he provides points out the fact that church was engaged both in spiritual and medical care. Nuns, as well as other women which volunteered, were an important part of the war effort on the home front.

One of the largest reception centres in Transylvania was Cluj. *Unirea* newspaper, the number of January 7/26, 1915, published an account on how Christmas was organized for wounded soldiers in hospitals. According to the article, in all military medical establishments with help from different donors, nuns and women from *Reuniunea femeilor române*, Christmas trees were brought in the big halls. Under them, were placed gifts, such as sweets, fruits, cigarettes, medals with religious motifs, books. Priests, civil, and military, Greek-Catholic and Orthodox,

19. AT-OeStA, KA Befehle 57 VII Korps Temesvar 1911-1915.

20. AT-OeStA, KA MBeh AFV 215 Pastoralberichte 1895-1915.

as for example Elie Dăianu and Petru Simu, were responsible for holding sermons which remembered the significance of the event. An important role had also the concerts of carols,²¹ which remembered to all those hospitalized of home and peacetime Christmases. This article presents people who were trying to get used to the changes brought by the war and at the same time to keep as many aspects from the past alive. The same engagement of the women left home can be seen also in correspondence. Elena Mureșianu from Brașov, wrote to her son Aurel, mobilized, about her activities with *Reuniunea femeilor române* from Brașov, which were similar with those in Cluj: they prepared sweet bread, collected books, clothes and cigarettes for thousands of wounded soldiers hospitalized in the city.²²

The donations for helping the wounded soldiers, those on the front line, the widows and the orphans, or the war effort were part of a general mobilization of the population, conducted by the church and different societies and reunions such as the Red Cross or ASTRA. People were advised by hierarchs or priests to donate for the benefit of the state and those in need, from money to clothes, books and metal.²³ For example, in one register of the Orthodox Parish from Prejmer, the old priest George Ludu, who remained to take care of the religious needs of those who were not mobilized, wrote that he sent to Sibiu on 6th July 1915, a report on the money he collected in favour of those wounded in the war. Some days later, on 27th July, he sent another report on the money the villagers gave for the Red Cross, in order to help those in need.²⁴

In the pages of the newspapers, it is visible that also military priests, either those in the hinterland, or those close to battle lines, donated money or asked for literature books, newspapers and prayer books. In the *Transilvania* magazine, the number of December 1917, ASTRA published the number of books and prayer books sent to requesters and their names. Among them were chaplain Aurel Crăciunescu in Brasov with 100, Iosif Pop from Sibiu with 40, Virgil Nistor with 500, Constantin Moldovan from Sibiu with 400, Eugen Munteanu from Timisoara with 100, Antonie German from Cluj with 100, Joseph, Petre Debu from Brașov with 260, Mircea Oprea from Alba Iulia with 100 etc. A total of 4,534 prayer books, 5,013 books and 347 calendars were sent all over the monarchy and on the battlefronts.²⁵ These lists which record the number of books are also an indicator of

21. *Unirea*, 7 (26 ianuarie 1915): 3.

22. <http://muzeulmuresenilor.ro/arhiva/primul-razboi-mondial/205-carte-potala-inv-14934.html> (Accessed on 12.01.2016).

23. Some of these can be seen in registers such as *Protocolul de Eshibite al parohiei Prejmer*, vol. IX, 1914-1927, in Arhiva parohiei ortodoxe Sfinții Apostoli Petru și Pavel, Prejmer, Brașov County.

24. *Protocolul de Eshibite al parohiei Prejmer*, vol. IX, 1914-1927, in Arhiva parohiei ortodoxe Sfinții Apostoli Petru și Pavel, Prejmer, Brașov County.

25. *Transilvania*, 7 (12/1 decembrie 1917): 174-175.

the population migration during the war throughout the monarchy, either as soldiers, or as interned civilians.

In addition to the wounded and sick in hospitals, in the hinterland were also soldiers detached to help to guard and for various other works. Coriolan Băran remembered one of the days when soldiers detached in Braşov were taken to church:

“The next day was the Sunday Pentecost, after the new calendar [...] On the following Saturday at noon, to our great astonishment, we had to hear at *Tagesbefehl* that on Sunday at 9, Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic soldiers must be present in the courtyard for *Kirchengang* [...] It was our great favour, that the holidays we did twice, in the courtyard I saw approximately 200-150 soldiers, who almost all spoke Romanian [...] less Serbs and Hungarian Greek Catholics [...] a young active officer from Silesia, [...] led us to the St. Nicholas church in Şchei [...] the officer was deeply impressed by the amount of candles and great pomposity of the service.”²⁶

According to the orders, in towns in the hinterland where there were churches and priests belonging to Orthodox and Greek Catholic denominations, soldiers were under the jurisdiction of the local priest. In provinces that were predominantly Catholic they were under the jurisdiction of Orthodox or Greek Catholics military clergy detached there.²⁷

Evidence of the importance of the priests and the effects of their sermons on the mentality of the hinterland and in hospitals can be found in the letters exchanged between the wounded soldiers and relatives. On 13th January 1915, one of the Transylvanian Romanian soldiers, Gheorghe Balatura, hospitalized in a hospital in Donawitz (Styria, Austria) wrote to those at home: “... God’s punishment upon us for our misdeeds and this is how fate is ... We each must accept our fate...”²⁸. After 1915, war was not over and peace seemed to be far away. According to the Holy Bible, such kinds of wars were permitted by God in order to bring people to a moral and religious life. Hierarchs and priests found this as the most plausible explanation for the Great War and promoted it.²⁹ According to this war theology, the duty of the clergy was to make people understand that only through a truly Christian behaviour or *Imitatio Christi* peace could be obtained. This determined people to turn even more close to church and priests.

26. Valeriu Leu, Nicolae Bocşan, *Marele Război în memoria bănăţeană 1914-1919*, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 187.

27. *Pastoralblatt*..., 1 (6 ianuarie 1916): 34.

28. RO-SJAN Cluj, *Colecţia scrisori din Primul Război Mondial, VII/549 De la prizonierii de război*, f. 146.

29. Alexandru Rusu, „Enciclica papală”, *Cultura Creştină*, 19 (1914): 493-500. AT-OeStA/ KA ZSt KM HR 769 Akten 9. Abt 1915. (Miron Cristea: *Cuvinte de mângâiere şi îmbărbătare*, 24. Dezember 1914); *Pastoralblatt für*..., 1 (6 ianuarie 1916): 3-5.

After 1916

UNTIL AUGUST 1916, Transylvania and Banat were not threatened to be transformed into battlefields. Romania's declaration of war against Austria-Hungary brought, even more, changes and at the same time sorrows and problems, as the territory became a war zone. Besides organizing the retreat of civilians and the military defence, one of the first issues the Austro-Hungarian Empire considered addressing was to control the Romanian population through hierarchs and priests. Bishop Miron Cristea of Caransebeş advised all, in a pastoral letter sent on August 16th (29), 1916, not to abandon their military virtues and to keep fulfil their duties towards the emperor and the fatherland. As an argument, he reminded on the connection between the emperor and Habsburg Romanian, over time. Cristea hoped that by keeping with the duties, no one could have any shadow of a doubt that the Romanians from Banat and Transylvania would have shaken hands with the enemy. This attitude was thought in the perspective in which, at the end of the war, Transylvania and Banat remained parts of Austria-Hungary. The editor and publisher of the newspaper *Unirea*, priest Ioan Suci, published an article which saw Romania's war entry as a mistake that would be paid for, given the kind of examples of help Russia had shown in the past, such as "the kidnapping of Bessarabia".³⁰

The compliance of bishops came also as a result of the actions taken by the Hungarian authorities, who, immediately after Romania's war declaration, ordered that intellectuals left home, especially priests, be arrested and interned in prison camps for civilians.³¹ According to numerous writings and testimonies, most of the arrested were roughed up and treated as traitors, despite the fact that none of them had the chance to prove his innocence. The Caransebeş bishop himself was sent to Budapest under the pretext that it was dangerous for him to remain in Banat. In his memoirs of Aurel Moacă, bishop's adviser, wrote about how, during the time in Budapest, the bishop was always watched by special agents and about his unremitting efforts to ease the fate of the internees.³²

Romanian Army's success did not last long and once with the withdrawal, a part of the population retreated as well, while another remained. Those who left

30. AT-OeStA, KA ZSt KM HR 982 Akten 9. Abteilung 1916; *Unirea* 88 (4 septembrie 1916): 1; *Unirea*, 89 (7 septembrie 1916): 1.

31. See for example: Ioana Elena Ignat, *Viața cotidiană în Făgăraș în anul 1916. Întemnițările vicarului Iacob Popa* (Cluj Napoca: Academia Română-Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2011); Sebastian Stanca, *Contribuția preoțimii române din Ardeal la războiul pentru întregirea neamului (1916-1919)*, ed. Mihai Octavian Groza, Mircea Gheorghe Abrudan (Cluj Napoca – Deva: Ed. Argonaut, Ed. Episcopiei Devei și Hunedoarei, 2015).

32. Valeriu Leu, Nicolae Bocșan and Mihaela Bedecan, *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană*, 3rd vol. (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, Academia Română, 2015), 404.

feared the measures that the Austro-Hungarian authorities will take, those who remained were either too advanced age or too attached to the homeland. Politicians, bishops and priests continued, largely and officially, to support the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They continued to believe that the empire will not fall apart and at the end of the war Habsburg Romanian nation will be rewarded for her loyalty. The reasons were much more different and complex and varied from person to person. Here can be included the fear of the consequences, loyalty, fear of the Russians, allegiance oath they had to take, for the sake of those who were in need of support and their families.

However, it must be stressed that at the same time the vast majority of Romanian military priests continued to support the national interest. Although always supervised, they found ways to inform the soldiers of what they hoped and felt: firstly, that orders from Vienna still had to be taken “in the hope of a better future for ourselves and our descendants”³³. Secondly, that in a prudent way, they too enjoyed and suffered for the victories and defeats of the Romanian Army.³⁴

One important task that military priests had to conduct in Transylvania after 1917 was the help for countering the enemy propaganda in the camps for returning prisoners-of-war, established after the Bolshevik revolution and the peace with Russia. In order to understand why the Austro-Hungarian authorities decided to create camps for returning POWs, it is essential to consider the problems the Dual Monarchy already had to face both on the home front, and on the Italian and Russian Fronts at the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918.

After three years of war, the home front population was under prolonged distress. There was insufficient food, clothing and even paper, especially in urban areas. At the same time, consequences of the Great War were to be seen everywhere: cities and villages were crowded with refugees, wounded soldiers, orphans, and widows. In addition, even since the war started state officials encouraged denouncements which “led to a crisis of truth that contributed to the dissolution of social relations at the local level,”³⁵ as historian Maureen Healy pointed out in her research on Vienna’s and Viennese life during the war.

In the meantime on the front line, the Austro-Hungarian authorities were fighting against the Entente’s planned propaganda, which aimed to promote American President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points and advised the Habsburg Romanian soldiers to stop fighting for Austria-Hungary and join Italian troops and those who had already deserted.³⁶

33. *Calendarul diecezan*, (Arad, 1918), 134.

34. Valeriu Leu, Nicolae Bocșan and Mihaela Bedecan, *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană 1914-1919*, 3rd vol., 146-147.

35. Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire*, Studies in the social and cultural history of modern warfare 17 (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 124.

36. Mark Cornwall, *The Undermining of Austria-Hungary. The Battle for Hearts and Minds* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000), 18-28; See also: *Soldați Români / Ofițerii și soldații Legiunei Române*

Because of mutinies that started to take place, the Dual Monarchy's authorities started to fear more and more the Bolshevik ideas, which promoted riots against state order, which could have been brought by returning soldiers from the East. One of the measures considered essential to stop the spread of information considered "harmful" to the state was to control the repatriation process of former POWs, before permitting them to come into contact with other Habsburg soldiers, the civilian population or soldiers on the Italian front. All the home-comers were to be transported to border points, where they were checked in order to assess their health. After that, they were shipped in one of the fifty-three quarantine camps, where they were held between 10 and 21 days. During this time, they were checked ideologically and morally and had to attend a patriotic re-education programme.³⁷ Because of a lack of personnel, the verification and patriotic sermons or classes were left to military priests, which received special instructions and had to report the situation in the camps back to Vienna.³⁸ Most of the camps organized in Transylvania were in the cities, such as Braşov, Cluj, Târgu Mureş, etc. Among the priests detached there were: Iosef Damjanovich, Petru Debu, George Antonovici, Traian Petrişor, etc.³⁹ Most of the reports they sent show that their main tasks were holding Holy Liturgies, Holy Confession and Communion, and sermons. At the same time, priests were encouraged to speak to soldiers, spread books and magazines where loyalty and obedience were encouraged. A general analysis of the information shows that soldiers were not so attracted to Bolshevism. They were longing to get home and were suffering due to food scarcity. Another problem that affected not only the homecomers but everyone else was the situation they had back home: poverty, sorrows, widows, orphans, the wounded and relatives sent to camps for civil prisoners.⁴⁰

in *Italia*, Europeana 1914-1918, http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu/en/europeana/record/9200203/BibliographicResource_3000093837232_source (Accessed on February 15, 2016).

37. Mark Cornwall, *The Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, 272-273.

38. Kornitzer, *Grund, Ziel, Organisation und Aufgabe der Feind-Propaganda-Abwehr*, (Vienna, 1918), 17.

39. AT-OeStA, KA, MBeh, AFV 245 Pastoralberichte 1918. AT-OeStA, KA, ZSt KM HR 1364 Akten 9. Abteilung 1918-1919. AT-OeStA, KA MBeh AFV 169 Kriegsgefangenen und Heimkehrlager.

40. AT-OeStA, KA, MBeh, AFV 245 Pastoralberichte 1918. AT-OeStA, KA, ZSt KM HR 1364 Akten 9. Abteilung 1918-1919. AT-OeStA, KA MBeh AFV 169 Kriegsgefangenen und Heimkehrlager.

Collapse of the Dual Monarchy and Conclusion

MOST OF the Habsburg Romanian military chaplains mobilized in 1914 kept serving until November 1918. At the beginning of the war, motivated by the idea of a reward for the Habsburg Romanian at the end of it, priests promoted the support for war effort. This meant volunteering for the frontline and helping those left home to cope with the transformations brought by the situation. By 1915 everyone left home had been affected by war and was mobilized in order to help those in need. In Transylvania and Banat, as well as in other parts of the country, war meant that men were mobilized while women had to take care of children but also the wounded that kept coming in the military hospitals, opened in all major cities. The mobilized priests, as well as military priests detached to the hinterland, had the possibility to help their fellow countrymen to cope spiritually with the sorrows and difficulties of the new life through religious services, the spread of prayer books, donations for those in need. The prolonging of the conflict, the authorities' attitude towards those left home and support for denunciations affected slowly and irreversibly loyalty towards the emperor from Vienna. By October 1918, no colourful military festivities, books, newspapers, prayer books, sermons about the importance of obedience, the holiness of oaths or faith were neither able to heal issues of the mind nor those of the body. One reason for which priests continued to do their duties lies in the allegiance oath that they took when were appointed as military priests. When it was clear that the monarchy was crumbling they began following orders from representatives of the Romanians from the former Dual. On their orders, they kept being involved in the repatriation process of former prisoners-of-war and soldiers from the Italian front. This measure was intended to prevent a civil war. Other important causes which keep priests doing their duties until November 118 were the possible consequences upon families and their nation. The fact that the nations' future had an important place in their activities was proved in the months after November 1918 when priests were involved in the transfer of power from Austro-Hungarian state to Habsburg Romanian representatives.⁴¹

41. As the pages of the newspaper *Timpul Nou* (November 1918-June 1919), show.

THE ACTIVITY OF POLICE FORCES IN BESSARABIA DURING WORLD WAR I



IGOR CHIOSA

Abstract

The present paper reflects the activity of police forces in Bessarabia during World War I. The topic is less-known in historiography, but it represents an important aspect of the history of the Romanian province occupied by the Russian Empire in 1812. The research is based solely on documents identified in the National Archive of Republic of Moldova and offers us information about the varied activity of police in Bessarabia during the Great War. It was important to see if the beginning of the conflict meant some deviation from the normal activity of police officers in the above mentioned territory. The documents extracted offered us precious information about the subject of our research.

Keywords

World War I, Bessarabia, Russian Empire, police forces, enemies, secret reports, mobilization, deportation

ANNEXED IN 1812 by the tsarists, the Romanian territory between the Prut and the Nistru rivers was renamed Bessarabia and incorporated in the Russian Empire. After a short period of so-called autonomy, the Romanian province was fully integrated into the empire, becoming a gubernia in 1871. To maintain the order in the new acquisition, the police forces were established and remained during the entire occupation until 1918.

Of course, police in the Tsarist Empire was not only an institution to enforce the law, to limit civil disorder, to protect property, etc., it was also an instrument of the central government to maintain its authority and to protect the interests of Petrograd throughout the entire empire, to identify the hostile elements towards the central government, and to prevent the fall of the crown, especially after the events that occurred in the empire in 1905¹, that, of course, scared the hole ruling class. Police was one of the pillars of the entire system.

Despite that the movement of 1905 was suppressed; the revolutionary elements were not eradicated. The beginning of the war could have been used by these forces to destabilize the entire system. Also, the war could have been used as a catalyst for the national movement in the entire empire that is why one of the main goals of the police was to monitor the atmosphere in the society, to identify the hostile element, and to eradicate all the threats for the Russian rule during that difficult period.

In the present study, we aim to address some less-known aspects of the history of Bessarabia during World War I. In particular, we will focus on the activity of police forces in the Romanian province occupied by the Russian empire. We intend to see if during the war the police forces in Bessarabia had special activities or just had the same “routine activity” like before the war. How many police officers were involved in the war, and in the social life as well.

In order to achieve our goals, we have consulted documents from the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova. Our research is based solely on archival materials that we have identified in two fonds: Fond number 2: chancellery of the governor of Bessarabia, and Fond number 289 regarding the police forces in Bessarabia.

We did not use any scientific literature because we wanted to show the activity of the police sources reflected in the primary sources: official disposition, orders, secret reports, etc., issued by different authorities.

The beginning of the war meant a huge mobilization process from all of the empire. The Russian empire had a huge territory, thus they had enough population to call to war. The war resulted in the mobilization of not only the regular army but also the reserve. According to a document² from 30 December 1914 sent to the city police of Chisinau, in the mobilization process had to be includ-

1. The Revolution of 1905.

2. National Archive of Republic of Moldova, fond 289, box 17, folder 2, page10.

ed the military reserve soldiers as well. Police had the task of supervising the process and of identifying the *ratniks*³ that did not come to the centres of mobilization.

As we can conclude, the authorities had to deal with reserve soldiers unwilling to go to the war, which is why the police had a difficult job of monitoring the whole mobilization process.

One of the aspects of the police force work in the Russian empire was the monitoring of the general atmosphere in the society and the identification of the hostile and radical elements. According to a secret report⁴ from February 1917, sent to the governor of Bessarabia by the *ispravnik*⁵ of Chisinau, in January, in his county, the agitation movements weren't present and the local populations were not expressing any dissatisfaction with the system.

Throughout the war, reports regarding the general atmosphere in the province had been sent by all heads of police from all Bessarabia counties. For example: the *ispravnik* from Orhei sent a report in which he mentioned that in his county, in January, there were no signs of agitation activity, illegal actions, or even thefts⁶. The report was signed on 7 February 1917.

Another report⁷ signed on 1 February 1917 by the *policemeister*⁸ of Ismail and also sent to the governor of the Bessarabia, stipulated that the mood of the intellectuals and workers was good. In this report, and also in others mentions were made that there were no signs to worry, that the general atmosphere was good, that revolutionary elements had not been detected, and the loyalty to the crown was unshakable.

Reports from January-February 1917 are more interesting, because, as we know, in February 1917 was organized a coup d'état that ended the 300 years of tsarism. We can assume that being a peripheral province, the revolutionary movement had not reached Bessarabia at the beginning of the year, or at least it was not so strong and that is why the police reports are so positive regarding general atmosphere. However, things changed during that year. An interesting fact: according to orders from 7 December 1911 and 27 May 1915 all reports, classified as secret, were sent to the governor of Bessarabia, i.e. to the highest level in the *gubernia*.

During the war, censorship was often used by the authorities in order to keep the situation under control. Those methods, of course, had their impact on the citizens and influenced the way of life. For example, according to one document⁹ issued on 9 February 1915 by the Odessa military region, the general-

3. Ratnik—reservist in the Russian imperial army.

4. N.A.R.M, fond 2, box 1, folder 9943, page 1.

5. Representative of the governor in counties. One of his duties was to maintain public safety.

6. N.A.R.M, fond 2, box 1, folder 9943, page 2.

7. N.A.R.M, fond 2, box 1, folder 9943, page 3.

8. Chief of the police.

9. N.A.R.M, fond 289, box 17, folder 2, page 119.

governor Mikhail Ebelov, it was forbidden to speak on the telephone in German, Hungarian, Turkish, or Hebrew (because it was difficult for censorship) languages. The document also mentioned that not only people who would talk on the phones would be punished, but also the citizens who would allow others to speak in these languages using their phones. As stipulated in the document, the civil servants working in public telephone companies or those working in private telephone companies had the task of not allowing anybody to speak in the languages mentioned above. If such violations were identified, these people had the duty to inform police. Police had the role of identifying those who ignored the order of the general-governor and of punishing them: a financial punishment up to 3,000 rubbles, or three months in prison, or exile.

Another example of censorship during the war represents the secret document sent by Minister of Internal Affairs on 2 April 1916 to all the governors from the empire¹⁰. The information in this document indicates that in regions with Muslim population the movie “The last day of Constantinople” had to be shown. The movie is about the conquest of the city and the killing of the emperor Constantine. In the opinion of the Minister, the movie could cause a false image of the power of Islam and Turkey that was why it had to be banned.

During World War I, the Russian and such Ottoman Empires were enemies, so forbidding a “propaganda movie” makes sense. The Christian-orthodox religion was one of the pillars of the Russian autocratic system. This is the reason why different religious minorities had a difficult life in the empire. The beginning of the war put more pressure on these groups, as the next document indicates.

According to a secret document¹¹ sent by the governor of Bessarabia, Mikhail Gilhen to the *ispravniks* and the *policemeisters* of the *gubernia*, the rise of sectarianism was very concerning for the authorities, because the main activities of the sectarian groups were against the Orthodox peoples. In the document, the governor mentioned that those religious groups taught their followers against the Russian traditions and promoted the antimilitarism, through propaganda and agitations. Baptists, Evangelicals, and Adventists were called sectarians groups. The document also mentioned that the “sectarianism movement” was supported by foreigners, and especially by the Germans. In the document, the governor offered arguments why these groups were dangerous for the Russian empire and ordered the police forces to monitor the activity of those religious minorities, and especially the activity of their leaders. It is very interesting, because, according to the document, these religious groups were seen as “Trojan horses” infiltrated by the Germans into the Russian empire. As it was mentioned, the Orthodox Church played an enormous role in the Russian Empire, which is why any “threats” to the

10. N.A.R.M, fond 2, box 1, folder 9760, page 172.

11. N.A.R.M, fond 289, box 23, folder 13, page 2.

dominant religion were seen as a challenge to the whole system, especially during the war.

After the revolution of 1905, the radical elements in the empire were not eradicated and they continued to put the authorities on alert. The International Workers' Day was a good opportunity to manifest against the system, especially in the times of total war.

According to a secret report¹² issued to all governors by the Minister of Internal Affairs on 8 April 1916, each year on the International Workers' Day, revolutionaries were using the workers and the radical intellectuals in demonstrations against the state. Because of the war, it was very important to maintain the order and to protect the crown. Police forces received the order to act quickly and decisively against any disorders.

During the war, police had the task of preventing the sabotage and the betrayal that could cause the defeat of the empire. The territory of the empire was rich in raw materials that could be smuggled to enemy countries, thus contributing to the defeat of the tsarist empire. Taking into account these aspects, the authorities issued a warning to the police forces in order to prevent such actions. For example, a secret document¹³ issued on 12 February 1915 by the *ispravnik* of the Chisinau County to a fellow police colleague, mentioned that, according to various sources, copper was taken from Russia to the German Empire. The *ispravnik* believed that the copper was smuggled to the German empire through the Kingdom of Romania, and he proposed that the Bessarabian police take under secret the spying of the segment of the border with Romania.

War, of course, meant that the general atmosphere in the belligerent countries was tensioned. For the citizens of the enemies countries living in the Russian empire during the conflict it was very difficult to live in peace and not to be subjected to pressure from the state. Documents from the National Archive of Republic of Moldova offer information about the situation of foreign citizens in the Russian empire, especially the legal status of citizens of German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires, thus, the enemies of the tsarist empire.

One document¹⁴ from 21 December 1914, signed by the *ispravnik* of the Soroca county, stipulated that all citizens of the enemy countries that did not receive the Russian citizenship, had to be arrested immediately and had to be deported to other far off regions of the Russian empire where they would be allowed to live.

Another interesting document regarding the fate of the citizens of the enemies' state was issued by the governor of Bessarabia, Mikhail Gilhen. In the telegram¹⁵ sent to the *ispravnik* of Soroca on 1 January 1915, the governor proposed that

12. N.A.R.M, fond 2, box 1, folder 9583, page 1.

13. N.A.R.M, fond 289, box 23, folder 13, page 18.

14. N.A.R.M, fond 289, box 27, folder 8, page 76.

15. N.A.R.M, fond 289, box 27, folder 8, page 1.

all healthy Germans: citizens of the German and the Austrian empires, aged 18-45, had to be deported to the Saratov *gubernia* as prisoners of war. Those who at that moment were sick, had to be sent to the Saratov *gubernia* after they became healthy. Also, governor Gilhen, proposed that ethnic Germans: citizens of the German and the Austro-Hungarian empires, older than 45 years should also be deported to the above mentioned *gubernia*. Another interesting information from this telegram is the mention about the ethnic Slavic people. The Governor indicated that Slavic individuals, citizens of these two empires, but whose loyalty to the tsar was questionable also had to be deported to Saratov. In both cases the police forces had the task of identifying the individuals that had to be deported, and to monitor the whole process.

In addition to the telegram sent on 1 January to the *ispravnik* of the Soroca County, the governor sent another telegram¹⁶ on 20 February 1915 with new instructions. The telegram contained 6 proposals regarding the a foreigners, but we will present only few of them, just to complete the information about the situations of the foreigners, especially the citizens of the enemy states, like the German, the Austro-Hungarian, and the Ottoman empires.

The first proposal from the telegram stipulated that the police had to complete the deportations of the citizens, aged 18-45, and able to bear arms, from the above-mentioned states. The telegram also indicated that French and Italian citizens were not subjects of deportation. Other categories of people not deported were the Christians from the Ottoman Empire and Slavic people – citizens of the three mentioned above enemy states. Police forces had the job to secure that the deportations were taking place and that wrong individuals were not deported to the Saratov *gubernia*.

These examples, and many others, regarding the deportations of the nationals of the German, the Austro-Hungarian, and the Ottoman empires show the situation during the war time. Of course, not all of those citizens were spies or organized subversionists, but the Russian authorities decided that it was safer to deport them to the *gubernias* inside the Russian empire, than to let them live there, in Bessarabia at the frontier of the empires. Certainly, those measures were drastic, but it was a war time, so definitely, the central authorities, through the local representatives, tried to eliminate everything that could harm the autocracy and the empire itself.

Intelligence plays a very important role in war times. Countries fighting against each other are trying to find the weaknesses of the enemy to succeed. So it was during the World War I, too.

During the wartime, the Bessarabian police forces had to deal with cases of espionage. On 15 January 1915, the *ispravnik* of Chisinau sent a secret document¹⁷

16. N.A.R.M, fond 289, box 27, folder 8, page 67.

17. N.A.R.M, fond 289, box 23, folder 13, page 9.

with information about a 49-year-old Danish citizen named Anton Christiansen. The document mentions that on 27 December 1915, Christiansen left from Copenhagen via Sweden with a large sum of money. According to the document, Anton Christiansen was a German spy, and he received money from the German mission to Copenhagen. The physical characteristics of Christiansen were: average height, fat, and a moustache.

This Danish citizen, Anton Christiansen, drew a serious attention of the authorities, because in another document¹⁸ there was a clear statement that in case he was identified, he should be arrested immediately.

Of course, during the war, information about different spies were enough. We just chose one case to reflect the activity of police forces also in that direction. The next two interesting cases show us how much the police was involved in the social life of the empire, Bessarabia included.

According to a document¹⁹ from the National Archives of Moldova, the Minister of Internal Affairs of Russian Empire had information that in some regions of the empire, in the stores envelopes with the image of German Kaiser and the imperial family of the German Empire had been sold. Because of the international situation, the minister believed that the sales with the images of the enemy heads of states and their families were inappropriate and had to be stopped. The document was sent to all *ispavnyks* and *policemeisters* from all of the empire on 26 February 1915.

In the end, we present information from other interesting documents regarding the large scale of implications of the police forces in the society during the war.

On 10 January 1916 a document²⁰ issued to the governors from all of the Russian empire by the Minister of Internal Affairs mentioned the indignation of King George the 5th of Great Britain. According to the document, the Ambassador of the Great Britain to Sankt Petersburg had informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs that King George was not happy that instead of the official hymn "God save the king", many orchestras in the Russian empire played the song "Rule Britannia". To avoid straining the relations between the allies, the document issued to all governors mentioned that from that point on, in all public interpretations, only the official hymn of the British Empire "God save the king" would be played.

Regarding the activity of the police forces in Bessarabia during World War I, we can draw some conclusions, based on the information we extracted from the archival sources mentioned in the text. Firstly, the police forces were involved enough in the order to save the empire from internal and also external enemies. Not only did they have their usual job, but the police officers also had the task of preventing any actions, including sabotage that could harm the Russian cam-

18. N.A.R.M, fond 289, box23, folder 13, page 10.

19. N.A.R.M, fond 289, box 17, folder 5, page 25.

20. N.A.R.M, fond 2, box 1, folder 9760, page 26.

paign in the war. Different categories of citizens were subject of intimidation from police forces, such as religious minorities, foreigners, or radical intellectuals, and workers. The citizens of the countries fighting against the Russian empire had a difficult time during the war. As we saw, they were subjects of persecution and deportation, and police was directly involved in the both cases. Also, after the installation of censorship, police had another task, i.e. that of identifying and punishing those who were breaking the law.

We can assume that because of the war and the nature of the empire, police forces played a major role in internal affairs, maintaining the power of the tsar and the ruling class. However, in the end, as we know, the Russian empire collapsed.

As we mentioned at the beginning, we chose this topic because it is largely unknown to the public, but it is an important part of the history of Bessarabia. We tried, through documents we identified in the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova, to present some aspects of the activity of the police forces between the Prut and the Nistru rivers during World War I, activities that in our opinion are interesting not only for the historians, but also for those interested in the history of the Romanian province.

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■ “The other face of the war” indicates there are some need to focus on World War I, which had a great impact on later generations influencing not only the interwar period, but also some thinking and acting till near present.

“The other face of the war” symbolizes also the readiness to study not only the military but also the civil aspects including the perspectives of the contemporaries on the other sides of the fronts.

“The other face of the war” may also show the respect to all small contemporary people too involved unwillingly into a period of dense violence.

Finally “the other face of the war” means the reason to participate at an international discussion on World War I studies focusing on less known subjects for working in favour of a larger horizon.